



White Salmon City Council MEETING MINUTES

May 6, 2026 – 6:00 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

Attendance:

Council Members:

David Lindley
Doug Rainbolt
Ben Giant
Patty Fink

Staff:

Marla Keethler, Mayor
Shawn MacPherson, City Attorney (Zoom)
Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Jennifer Neil, Director of Finance and Operations
Chris True, Director of Public Works
Mike Hepner, Police Chief

I. Call to Order (6:00 p.m.)

Mayor Marla Keethler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A total of five members of the public were in attendance, both in person and via teleconference.

A. Land Acknowledgement (6:00 p.m.)

The Land Acknowledgement was delivered.

B. Presentation of the Flag (6:01 p.m.)

The Presentation of the Flag was conducted.

II. Roll Call (6:02 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order with four Council members present, constituting a quorum.

A. Motion to Excuse Council Member Morella Mora

Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by David Lindley.

Move to excuse the absence of Council Member Morella Mora from the May 6 City Council meeting.

Giant – Aye, Fink – Aye, Rainbolt – Aye, Lindley – Aye

MOTION CARRIED 4-0

III. Additions or Corrections to the Agenda (None)

IV. Public Comment (6:03 p.m.)

A. Tamera Toppel, residing inside the City.

Tamera Toppel, Director of the Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce, provided a report on the Community Cleanup event held at the end of April. She thanked the City of White Salmon, Klickitat County, Republic Services, and community volunteers

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for their support. Director Tippel also recognized the White Salmon Public Works staff for going above and beyond during the event.

She reported that the event was successful and reflected a true community effort involving the Chamber, Rotary, City staff, volunteers, and partner agencies. Event metrics included 506 vehicle trips through the event site; 31 White Salmon home pickups arranged through the Chamber; approximately 35 Bingen curbside pickups handled by Bingen Public Works; 126 volunteer sign-ins over the two-day event; and 613 total volunteer hours, including planning meetings.

V. Presentation (6:07 p.m.)

A. Heritage Month Presentation (6:07 p.m.)

In recognition of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and Jewish American Heritage Month, Council introduced a presentation recognizing the contributions of these communities and the importance of remembering history.

Council then viewed a brief video presentation from Oregon's Fox 12 News highlighting the Yasui family of Hood River, Oregon, and their pursuit of justice following the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The video discussed the Yasui Brothers Company store, founded in 1908, the treatment of Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and broader questions of citizenship, democracy, and what it means to be American.

The presentation emphasized the importance of education, historical awareness, justice, inclusion, and recognition of the contributions and experiences of diverse communities. Full video: [The Yasui story: How one Oregon family fought for equality, justice during WWII](#)

B. City Highlights with the Mayor (6:13 p.m.)

Mayor Keethler recognized staff, including City Clerk Erika Castro Guzman and Public Works Director Chris True, for their work on the first Civic Slices event. She reported that the next Civic Slices event is scheduled for July 29 and will focus on housing. She also highlighted the recent wildfire open house, noting collaboration with local partners and discussions regarding preparedness, evacuation planning, fuel mitigation, and related City water projects.

Mayor Keethler also reported that the City submitted the RCO grant application and will present to the committee later in the month, with a technical deadline expected in July. She noted that White Salmon was invited to present as a case study to the Washington Transportation Professionals Forum regarding speed-limit reductions and safety planning. She also shared information about the new Wildfire Ready Klickitat resource hub and encouraged Council and the public to use and share it as a wildfire preparedness resource.

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VI. Consent Agenda (6:19 p.m.)

- A. Approval of Adult Probation Interlocal Agreement with Klickitat County**
- B. Resolution 2026-05-644 – Declaring Surplus Property**
- C. Approval of Vouchers**
Vouchers audited and certified as required by RCW 42.24.080 and expense reimbursement claims as required by RCW 42.24.090 as of this 6th day of May 2026.

Type	Date	Beginning Check	Ending Check	
Claims	04/23/2026	43444	43445	\$9,438.94
	04/27/2026	EFT	EFT	\$12,964.01
	05/06/2026	43448	43448	\$307,999.16
			Claim Total	\$330,402.11
Payroll	04/20/2026	EFT	EFT	\$92,663.92
	05/05/2026	43446	43446	\$46,700.48
	05/05/2026	EFT	EFT	\$116,166.72
			Payroll Total	\$255,531.12
			Toal Vouchers	\$585,933.23

Council asked whether the cluster boxes would be surplus at a later date, and staff confirmed they would be. Council also asked how residents can find City surplus items, and staff stated that the City uses GovDeals.com for surplus auctions, where interested individuals can register for notifications.

Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by Doug Rainbolt.
Motion to approve Consent Agenda and Vouchers for \$585,933.23.

Giant – Aye, Fink – Aye, Rainbolt – Aye, Lindley – Aye.
MOTION CARRIED 4-0

VII. Public Hearing (6:21 p.m.)

- A. Ordinance 2026-05-1187 – Amending WASMC 2.20.010**
 - 1. Presentation (6:21 p.m.)**
 Mayor Marla Keethler opened the public hearing on Ordinance 2026-05-1187, amending White Salmon Municipal Code (WSMC) Section 2.20.010 related to City committees, at 6:21 p.m.

Staff explained that the proposed updates were intended to clarify committee procedures, improve transparency, and provide a structure that allows the public to observe or participate in committee work. Staff noted that the ordinance responds to prior Council direction and feedback regarding committee operations, including how committee members meet, gather information, and bring recommendations forward to Council.

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2. Public Testimony (6:32 p.m.)

Mayor Marla Keethler opened the public testimony portion of the public hearing regarding Ordinance 2026-05-1187 at 6:32 p.m.

Hearing none, Mayor Keethler closed the public testimony portion at 6:33 p.m.

3. Discussion (6:33 p.m.)

Council discussed proposed updates to WSMC Section 2.20.010 regarding City Committees. Discussion focused on balancing transparency with flexibility for committee members, including how members may gather public input, meet in non-quorum groups, and bring ideas or recommendations forward to Council. Council also discussed past committee experiences and the importance of providing clear direction to volunteers while maintaining opportunities for public observation and participation.

Councilmember Patty Fink abstained after expressing concerns regarding transparency and clear guidance for committee members, while also stating she was willing to see how the updated process works moving forward.

4. Action (7:02 p.m.)

**Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by David Lindley.
Motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-05-1187, amending White Salmon
Municipal Code Section 2.20.010 – Committees.**

No further discussion.

**Giant – Aye, Fink – Abstained, Rainbolt – Aye, Lindley – Aye.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0-1**

VIII. Reports and Communications (7:03 p.m.)

A. Klickitat County Commissioner Todd Andrews (7:03 p.m.)

Mayor Keethler welcomed Klickitat County District 1 Commissioner Todd Andrews to provide County updates and answer Council questions.

Council thanked Commissioner Andrews for his work with the Pucker Huddle neighborhood on speed-limit concerns along SR 141 in the Urban Growth Area.

Council discussed the County Comprehensive Plan update, coordination with the City on Urban Growth Area planning, housing, infrastructure, long-term service alignment, ADUs, short-term rentals, and future annexation needs. Commissioner Andrews stated that the County has been conducting community outreach, including in White Salmon and Trout Lake, with additional outreach expected later in the year and final stages anticipated in 2027.

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Council also discussed County finances, revenue trends, data centers, Sheriff's Office funding, and service levels on the west side of the County. Commissioner Andrews noted increased law enforcement and jail costs, stated that the criminal justice sales tax increase funded one additional Sheriff's Office position, and reported that two deputies are expected to complete training in the coming months.

Council expressed interest in better understanding service outcomes and budget effectiveness during future County budget discussions.

B. Department Head Reports (7:41 p.m.)

Public Works Director Chris True provided updates on current infrastructure projects. He reported that the water treatment plant is online and performing well, the North Main and Spring Street project is approximately 85 percent complete, Phase 2B is expected to go to bid in November, and Phase 2A is ahead of schedule. Director True also reported a standpipe failure caused by prior construction issues and emphasized that current infrastructure improvements are increasing system safety and reliability. He also provided an update on Gaddis Park, noting that hazard trees have been removed and volunteers are expected to assist with cleanup, with possible signage and mapping updates to follow.

C. Council Member Reports (7:46 p.m.)

During Council Reports, Councilmembers shared project updates and upcoming items.

Councilmember Patty Fink reported that the Tree Board, Underwood Conservation District, and Friends of Jewett Creek are expected to assist with cleanup at Gaddis Park, with a date to be selected at the May 11 Tree Board meeting. She also reported on the organics study, noting that a yard debris/organics drop box appeared to be the most financially feasible option and that funding may be sought from the Department of Ecology for a demonstration project. Councilmember Fink also attended the County childcare workshop and noted that it was well attended.

Councilmember David Lindley recognized the Civic Slices event and stated that it went well. He also attended the Wildfire Open House and appreciated the open house format, neighborhood interaction, and discussion regarding phone trees and neighborhood captains. He reported that City Lab did not meet in April, but noted that an engineer from Puget Sound Energy is expected to attend a future meeting to discuss a proposed EV-ready ordinance for new construction.

Councilmember Doug Rainbolt provided an update on ongoing work to evaluate service charges as a potential future revenue source. He noted that additional analysis is underway, including review of meter information, infrastructure data, and available GIS tools. He also reported that a consultant provided helpful information regarding the City's asset data and how it may support future financial planning.

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IX. Executive Session (7:53 p.m.)

- A.** Mayor Keethler announced that Council would adjourn to executive session for 17 minutes to discuss potential litigation with legal counsel pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). The executive session included Council, the City Attorney, Chris True, and Mayor Keethler. Council met in a separate Zoom session while the public meeting remained open.


Council adjourned to executive session at 7:54 p.m. and returned to open session at 8:11 p.m. No action was taken.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

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Maria Keethler, Mayor

Signed by:

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Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk