



White Salmon City Council MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2026 – 6:00 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

Attendance:

Council Members:

David Lindley
Doug Rainbolt
Morella Mora
Ben Giant
Patty Fink

Staff:

Marla Keethler, Mayor (Zoom)
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 14 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 five Council members present, constituting a quorum.

III. Additions or Corrections to the Agenda (None)

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

A. Tom Gibson, residing inside the City.

Tom Gibson, a Snohomish Place resident, spoke in support of improving the City's water infrastructure and raised concerns about the Stauch and Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project. He asked whether private service lines would be replaced and expressed concern about potential homeowner responsibility for future leaks or failures. He also asked about construction impacts, including water interruptions, access, parking, and restoration. Gibson stated he did not support approving the engineering-services contract as written and asked Council to consider his concerns before voting.

Mayor Keethler clarified that the item before Council was for engineering services only and that the project was in an early stage. She stated that, if the project moved forward, the City would provide advance notice and coordinate with affected residents.

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- B. Dorothy Toppercer**, residing inside the City.
Dorothy Toppercer, a Snohomish Place resident, commented on the Stauch and Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project. She raised concerns about the condition of the alleyway, potential impacts from future development, and whether prior commitments to pave the alleyway had been addressed. She requested that alley paving be prioritized as part of the larger project and asked whether the improvements would include a fire hydrant.

- C. Dana Scheffler**, residing inside the City.
Dana Scheffler, a White Salmon resident, raised concerns about overflowing garbage and recycling cans and asked the City to advocate for improved service from Republic Services or review the solid waste contract. He also commented on the Stauch and Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project, stating that the contract did not clearly show the proposed route or work area. He requested that the City provide a clear map as the project moves forward.

V. Presentation (6:18 p.m.)

- A. Heritage Month Presentation (6:18 p.m.)**
In recognition of Jewish American Heritage Month, Council introduced a presentation on the history, culture, and contributions of Jewish Americans in the United States. The presentation highlighted Jewish American involvement in civic life, business, government, the arts, philanthropy, education, journalism, law, science, medicine, entertainment, and social justice. Council also acknowledged the history of Jewish communities in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest, noting their role in building businesses, civic organizations, and community life throughout the region.

Council then viewed a brief video presentation highlighting Jewish American history from early settlement in New York in 1654 through modern contributions in literature, science, medicine, education, public service, and civic society. Council also recognized the work of the Washington State Jewish Historical Society in preserving Jewish history and emphasized the importance of education, inclusion, representation, and recognition of Jewish Americans' cultural and civic contributions. Full video: [Jewish American Heritage Month 2026](#)

- B. City Highlights with the Mayor (6:25 p.m.)**
Mayor Marla Keethler provided brief updates regarding the State Route 14 Mainline Phase IIA water replacement project, noting that the planned repaving closure did not occur because the asphalt plant was unable to produce material meeting WSDOT specifications. The City is awaiting direction from WSDOT on whether the closure can be extended once asphalt is available.

Mayor Keethler recognized Public Works Director Chris True and the Public Works team in honor of Public Works Appreciation Week and thanked them for their

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professionalism and service to the community. She also noted that the burn ban for the City’s area of Klickitat County District 3 will begin June 1.

Mayor Keethler announced that the splash pad would open the following day, Gaddis Park cleanup work would take place later in the week, and swim pass registration is now open through the White Salmon Valley Metropolitan Park District. She also reminded Council that July and August will each have one Council meeting, held on the first Wednesday of the month.

IV. Additional Public Comment (6:28 p.m.)

After the close of public comment, Mayor Keethler recognized Jose Gruart to provide comment.

D. Jose Gruart, residing inside the City.

Jose Gruart provided public comment regarding his property at the corner of Green Street and Snohomish Place. He stated that vehicles are driving over his property line and expressed concern about access, traffic, and the need to be notified of any public work affecting the area.

VI. Consent Agenda (6:29 p.m.)

- A. Appointments to Committees — Confirmation of Mayor’s Appointments**
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes — April 15, 2026 (Regular)**
- C. Approval of Meeting Minutes — April 29, 2026 (Special Meeting)**
- D. Approval of Meeting Minutes - April 29, 2026 (Civic Slices)**
- E. Change Order No. 2 — Tapani Inc. — Transmission Main Replacement Phase IIA**
- ~~**F. Consultant Agreement with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. — Stauch & Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project**~~
- G. Developer Agreement — Charters Short Plat Sewer Service (NE Spring Street)**
- H. Pay App No. 4 — Tapani Inc — Transmission Main**
- I. Pay App No. 11 — Ajax NW — N Main Spring Street**
- J. 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 20th day of May 2026.

Type	Date	Beginning Check	Ending Check	
Claims	05/05/2026	EFT	EFT	\$3,732.62
	05/11/2026	EFT	EFT	\$7,920.00
	05/15/2026	EFT	EFT	\$81,849.00
	05/20/2026	43511	43554	\$545,533.12
			Claim Total	\$639,034.74
Payroll	05/20/2026	EFT	EFT	\$92,865.87
			Payroll Total	\$92,865.87
			Toal Vouchers	\$731,900.61

Councilor Doug Rainbolt requested that Item F, Consultant Agreement with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. — Stauch & Snohomish Water Line Replacement

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Project, be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately under Business Items for further discussion.

Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by Doug Rainbolt.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda, excluding Item F, and Vouchers for \$731,900.61.

Further Discussion

Council commented on the Spring Street property materials and expressed appreciation for the collaboration and comprehensive nature of the proposed solution. Council also expressed appreciation for the additions to the City's committees.

Council discussed the Charter Agreement and asked whether it was consistent with the City's right-of-way code. Staff stated that the matter had received thorough review and they could follow up after the meeting regarding the code clarification.

Giant – Aye, Fink – Aye, Rainbolt – Aye, Mora – Aye, Lindley – Aye.

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

VII. Business Item (6:36 p.m.)

A. Consultant Agreement with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. — Stauch & Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project

1. Presentation (6:36 p.m.)

Mayor Marla Keethler introduced the business item regarding the consultant agreement with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. for the Stouch and Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project, which had been pulled from the consent agenda.

Councilmember Doug Rainbolt recused himself from the discussion and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

2. Discussion (6:37 p.m.)

Council discussed the agreement and confirmed that it was for engineering services to determine the project scope, timeline, milestones, and related needs. Staff stated that the agreement was similar to prior Anderson Perry contracts, had been reviewed by legal counsel, and was lower in cost than other water project contracts due to limited project funding and additional work being handled by staff. Staff noted that the total project funding was \$250,000.

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3. Action (6:39 p.m.)

Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by Morella Mora.

Motion to approve the Consulting Agreement with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. for the Stouch and Snohomish Water Line Replacement Project in an amount not to exceed \$38,000, plus reimbursable expenses, and to authorize execution of the agreement.

Further discussion

Councilmember Ben Giant stated for the record that he supported infrastructure projects addressing aging infrastructure and did not believe he needed to recuse himself from the vote because the agreement was for engineering services, despite living on the street being improved.

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

Concluding the Business Item, Councilmember Rainbolt returned to the Council Chambers.

VIII. Reports and Communications (6:41 p.m.)

A. Department Head Reports (6:41 p.m.)

Police Chief Mike Hepner reported that on Monday, April 14, 2026, City Police Officer Cody Melton responded with Bingen Fire Department personnel to a medical call involving an unconscious adult male with abnormal breathing near State Route 141. Upon arrival, Officer Melton and Bingen Fire personnel continued CPR, administered Narcan, and deployed an AED until Klickitat County EMS arrived. The patient was transported to the hospital and survived. Officer Melton was recognized with a Life Saving Award for his actions in helping preserve the life of another person.

B. Council Member Reports (6:43 p.m.)

During Council Reports, members shared project updates and upcoming goals.

Councilor Rainbolt provided updates regarding ongoing work on service development charges, including interviews with other cities.

Councilor Mora thanked Director True and Fire Chief Wes Long for providing informational tours of the City's water utility and public safety service areas, noting that the tours helped provide a better understanding of City operations.

Council discussed a proposed letter of support for the Pucker Huddle Coalition to include in its June 1 presentation to WSDOT. Councilor Mora noted that the coalition had support from state representatives, Klickitat County, and numerous property owners and residents.

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Staff noted that the draft letter had not been included in the published agenda packet and reminded Council of the importance of following public meeting procedures and providing materials in advance when possible.

- 1. Addition to the Agenda (6:50 p.m.)
Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by David Lindley.
Motion to suspend the rules and add consideration of the Pucker Huddle Coalition Letter of Support as a business item due to the timing of the coalition’s June 1 presentation to WSDOT and Council’s prior discussion of the issue.**

**Giant – Aye, Fink – Aye, Rainbolt – Aye, Mora – Aye, Lindley – Aye.
MOTION CARRIED 5-0**

Councilor Lindley reported that City Lab met on Monday, with two prospective members in attendance, and discussed the draft EV-ready ordinance with Klickitat PUD. The ordinance is expected to come before Council at the next meeting.

Councilor Giant reported that the City participated in the Health Awareness Fair and thanked staff for assisting with the City booth. He also provided a Community Development Committee update, including proposed Heritage Month recognition revisions, committee recruitment, and interest in a June 19 World Cup watch party with possible Juneteenth tie-ins.

Councilor Fink reported that she would follow up on solid waste concerns through the Solid Waste Management Committee and county representative. She also provided an update on the Gaddis Park cleanup scheduled for May 22 and June 5, noting that tools would be provided and volunteer waivers required.

IX. Additional Business Item (6:59 p.m.)

A. Letter of Support – Pucker Huddle Coalition State Route 141 Speed Control

1. Presentation (6:59 p.m.)

Mayor Marla Keethler introduced the additional business item regarding a proposed letter of support for the Pucker Huddle Residence speed limit reduction request.

2. Discussion (6:59 p.m.)

Councilmembers discussed the draft letter, the timing of the request, and the appropriate process for issuing a letter of support. Council expressed general support for the residents’ efforts and the requested speed limit reduction.

Staff advised that, because the letter would be non-binding, legal review was not required. Staff noted that Council positions are often handled by resolution, but a letter of support would also be appropriate. Staff further

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advised that any post-meeting editing by a quorum of Councilmembers could raise Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) concerns.


Council reached consensus to authorize Mayor Keethler to prepare and send a City letter of support consistent with Council’s discussion, with editorial discretion granted. Councilmember Mora agreed to provide delivery information so the letter could be sent before the June 1 deadline.


No formal motion was made.

X. Executive Session (None)

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

DocuSigned by:

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Marla Keethler, Mayor

Signed by:

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Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk