



# City of Rockaway Beach

## City Council Workshop Minutes

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**Date:** Wednesday, December 10, 2025

**Location:** Rockaway Beach City Hall, 276 Hwy 101 - 2nd Floor Conference Room

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McNeilly called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### 2. ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Mayor Charles McNeilly; Councilors Penny Cheek, Kiley Konruff, Tom Martine, Mary McGinnis, and Pat Ryan

Staff Present: Luke Shepard, City Manager; Melissa Thompson, City Recorder; Marni Johnston, Finance Director; Mary Mertz, Public Works Director

### 3. COUNCIL BRIEFING/DISCUSSION

#### a. Utility Assistance Program - Marni Johnston, Finance Director and Koren Karlovic, CARE

- Shepard explained he asked Johnston months ago to develop a Utility Assistance Program to assist community members most impacted by the upcoming sewer rate increase.
- Johnston explained the new program would be funded by an initial budget adjustment of \$15,000 from the General Fund contingency. Community Action Resource Enterprises (CARE) will administer the program. Funds will cover assistance and CARE's administrative fee.
- Karlovic explained how CARE would administer the program, review applications, and determine eligibility.
- Johnston and Karlovic clarified that CARE will submit payments to the city, and the application will be a simple form for applicants.
- Program can be evaluated and revised as needed.
- Rollout targeted for February 2026 (aligned with sewer rate increase).
- Shepard outlined next steps, including developing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CARE, finalizing budget adjustment, and finalizing eligibility criteria, application process, and communication plan.

#### b. Option Agreement for Jetty Creek Watershed - Mary Mertz, Public Works Director

- Mertz gave a presentation providing background on acquisition of the lower Jetty Creek Watershed and explanation of the Option Agreement that will give the City the exclusive right to buy the lower half of the watershed.
- Mertz explained the action requested of the Council at the regular meeting to authorize the City Manager to amend the Letter of Interest (LOI) to extend the deadline for the Option Agreement and sign the Option Agreement.
- Council members acknowledged all involved in the process of the acquisition.
- Announced that the next Forest Stewardship Plan Advisory Committee (FSPAC) meeting will be held on January 16, 2026.

**c. Review of Sewer and Water Code Updates Related to Billing**

- Shepard explained water and sewer codes were reviewed in relation to the proposed sewer rate adjustments.
- Proposed ordinances update the code to change billing dates and outdated references to specific staff members.

**d. Review of OLCC Renewals**

- Shepard suggested that review of Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) renewals could be considered under the regular session Consent Agenda in the future.
- Comments about limited reasons to recommend denial of OLCC renewals.
- Council supported considering future renewals under the regular meeting consent agenda.

**e. Review of Wayside Use Applications**

- Shepard noted that consideration of the Wayside application approvals would take place in January.
- One application for July 4th is in conflict with policy and could be addressed administratively. Council consensus to do so.
- Current process is first-come, first-served and not a level playing field. Shepard suggested a simple process for 2027 with a specified review date for application submittals.
- Discussion regarding event's economic and livability benefits, citizen suggestion to move more events to Phyllis Baker Park, more utilization of Anchor Street Park, and the constraints of Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad (OCSR) using Rockaway as a boarding hub (using parking spaces).
- Comments regarding possible opportunity to make improvements to Phyllis Baker Park.
- Discussion regarding Thursday Market and comment that every week in summer takes up a lot of parking. Consensus to decline the use of Wayside and suggest moving to Anchor Street Park or Phyllis Baker Park.
- Discussion regarding Arts & Crafts Fair and comments that it brings economic value, and good attendance. Consensus to keep at Wayside.
- Discussion regarding Kite Festival and consensus to keep at Wayside.

f. **Other Regular Session Agenda Items Review**

- Shepard noted that it will be the last Council meeting of 2025.
- Comments on success of 2025.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by** Penny Cheek, seconded by Tom Martine, to adjourn the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

**Motion Passed** by the following vote:

Yes: 5 (Mary McGinnis, Tom Martine, Penny Cheek, Kiley Konruff, Pat Ryan)

No: 0 (None)

MINUTES APPROVED THE  
14TH DAY OF JANUARY 2026

  
Charles McNeilly, Mayor

ATTEST

  
Melissa Thompson, City Recorder