



**CITY OF JOHN DAY  
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

**COUCILORS PRESENT:**

Sherrie Rininger, Mayor  
Chris Labhart, Councilor  
Eric Bush, Council President  
Ron Phillips, Councilor  
Bradley Hale, Councilor  
Heather Swank, Councilor

**COUNCILORS ABSENT**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Melissa Bethel, City Manager  
Jeremy Green, City Attorney

**Agenda Item No. 1—Call Meeting to Order**

The City Council meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**Agenda Item No. 2—Pledge of Allegiance**

The City Council stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda Item No. 3—Roll Call and Attendance**

All councilors were present.

**Agenda Item No. 4—Amend or Accept Regular Agenda**

***Councilor Bush moved to accept the agenda as published. The motion was seconded by Councilor Swank and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 5—Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

**Agenda Item No. 6—Consent Agenda**

- a. Accounts Payable through 2-3-25
- b. Minutes of 12-17-24 and 1-14-25 and WWTP tour 2-4-25
- c. Approval of appointment of Ed Newby to the Planning Commission to fulfill Brad Hale's position expiring January 1, 2028

Bethel stated the minutes from 12-17-24 were not available.

***Councilor Bush made a motion to approve the consent agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 7—Discussion/Appointment of City Council member to serve in Dave Holland's vacated seat**

- a. Vern Pifer

***Councilor Bush made a motion to appoint Vern Pifer to the vacant council position. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.***

***Councilor Bush made a motion to direct city manager to administer the oath of office to Vern Pifer. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hale and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 8—Ordinance 24-204016: An Ordinance of the City of John Day Establishing Camping Regulations and a Campsite Removal Policy**

***Councilor Labhart made a motion to read Ordinance 24-204016 an Ordinance of the City of John Day establishing camping regulations and a campsite removal policy by title only. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bush and passed unanimously.***

***Councilor Labhart made a motion to adopt Ordinance 24-204016. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hale and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 9—Approval of Cybermill lease—300 Barns, Seneca**

***Councilor Bush made a motion to approve the Cybermill lease pending final legal revision. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hale and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 10—Approval of Rally sale agreement—300 Barns, Seneca**

***Councilor Bush made a motion to approve the sale of 300 Barns Avenue building to Rally Networks pending any final legal review. The motion was seconded by Councilor Swank and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 11—Approval of Settlement Agreement with Rally**

***Councilor Bush made a motion to approve the settlement agreement with Rally Networks. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 12—Discussion/Decision regarding the practice of using city equipment and personnel for private citizens/companies**

The city has a practice of making equipment and personnel available to private contractors. Green recommends council to either completely discontinue the practice due to liability reasons or establish a policy that requires a written agreement, which would be signed with those private institutions.

**Brian Montague:** Mr. Montague feels like if these services are discontinued it will not be able to bring in extra revenue and it will also cause the City sewer problems down the line. On top of rates increasing to cover the new sewer plant he asked why not bring in more revenue on equipment the City already owns. Several councilors believe the liability issue is very important to consider.

***Councilor Bush made a motion to suspend the past practice of renting, loaning or allowing the use of city personnel and equipment to private parties and eliminate the sale of city supplies and property to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hale and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 13—Discussion regarding Compression (Jake Brakes) Brakes**

In order for this to happen the City is going to have to go through a process with ODOT, pay for signs and in the end, there isn't much enforcement. Bethel stated she will reach out to ODOT to see if they're willing to put up signs and report back.

**Agenda Item No. 14—Approval for Councilor Swank and Hale to be added as check signers and remove Dave Holland, Heather Rookstool and Ed Newby. Approval for City Manager Bethel to be added as a backup signer to discuss the accounts and signatories with bank.**

***Councilor Bush made a motion to add Councilors Swank, Hale and Pifer as authorized check signers on the City accounts and remove former Councilors Holland and Newby and former Mayor Rookstool from the same signature card and approve City Manager Bethel to be added as a back up signer for the purposes of being able to manage and discuss accounts with the bank. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 15—City Manager Comments**

a. Goal Setting and Strategic planning discussion continued  
Bethel has still been searching for a company to work on strategic planning.  
She has a meeting setup next week with Representative Owens.  
There will be an RFP going out for engineers and will be on the next agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 16—Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilor Bush stated he appreciated the tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

**Adjourn:**

There being no further business before council the meeting was adjourned.

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Melissa Bethel, CM