

CITY OF JOHN DAY
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES December 9, 2025

COUCILORS PRESENT:

Sherrie Rininger, Mayor
Chris Labhart, Councilor
Bradley Hale, Councilor
Ron Phillips, Councilor
Vern Pifer, Councilor
Heather Swank, Councilor
Meloni Cochran, Councilor

COUNCILORS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT:

Don Gabbard, Fire Chief
Henry Hearley, Contract Planner
Trish Rice, Contract City Engineer

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 Pifer made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. 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 12-3-25
- b. Minutes of City Council Meeting 11-18-25

Councilor Cochran made a motion to accept the consent agenda as published. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 7—Public Hearing

PAPA25-01: Grant County Fairgrounds is requesting Site Design Review for an expansion of the existing RV Park on Fairgrounds property. The proposal would add 25 new spaces on a vacant parcel off the extension of NW 3rd Street, adjacent to existing County Fairgrounds properties. In addition, the applicant is requesting a zoning change for a portion of the parcel from Residential Limited to Parks Reserve. Because the application includes a zone change, it is subject to a Type IV review, and the Site Design

Review will occur concurrently. The property lies within the regulated floodplain; a floodplain development permit will be required but it is not part of the current review before the Planning Commission and City Council. Planning Commission recommends approval with conditions.

a. Staff Report

Hearley presented a staff report. The applicant is requesting a zone change to increase the portion of land zoned Park Reserve and decrease the portion of land zoned Residential Limited in order to facilitate an RV Park on County land. Hearley reviewed all of the Planning Commissions recommendations. The City Council should accept, reject or revise those recommendations.

b. Applicant Presentation

Winegar clarified that the City Engineer is the duly appointed designee of the Public Works Director and would serve in this role only until a Public Works Director is hired and feels they should not have to pay the City Engineer for this interim role. The applicant provided responded to all questions raised by Council, addressing each inquiry thoroughly. She stated the RV park would enhance the fairgrounds operations and provide substantial benefits to local businesses and the community.

c. Open the hearing

Mayor Rininger opened the Public Hearing

d. Public Testimony

John Rowell: He expressed this project would benefit the county as a whole by attracting more people and boosting economic activity and believes it is an obvious opportunity to move forward

Dusty Williams: He noted that many had discussed transient room tax and reminded Council there will be a water and sewer bill at the RV rate, which will result in additional revenue for the City.

Luis Provencher: He expressed his support for the project, noting that the RV park is used by travel nurses and doctors which is critical for this area.

MT Anderson: He noted the lack of RV options in John Day and strongly encouraged the Council to move this project forward, highlighting its economic benefits and seeing no downside.

e. Applicant rebuttal

No Applicant Rebuttal

f. Close Public Hearing

Mayor Rininger closed the Public Hearing

g. Deliberation

Hearley and Rice clarified some points that were made. The City Engineer's review is covered by the application fees, by signing the application the applicant agrees to pay for this review. He also noted that the new floodplain regulations require a habitat mitigation assessment.

Winegar expressed that the trail system issues should be addressed at a later date, as it is not a decision she can make right now and it would just cause more delays.

Council reached a consensus to proceed with Option B for the right-of-way and it will be the applicant's responsibility to formally take action to correct the right-of-way.

Councilor Cochran made a motion to proceed with Option B and accept the recommendations presented to the Council by the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.

Other Business:

None

Agenda Item No. 8—Mayor and Council Comments

Mayor Rininger need a Councilor to judge the businesses and their Christmas decorations. Councilor Cochran agreed to this.

Adjourn:

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

Melissa Bethel, CM