



MINUTES

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Meeting

Council Chambers, City Hall

Approved: May 13, 2026

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Mayor led the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call

Councilors present: Mayor Johnson, and Councilors Carolyn McLeod, Marilyn Smith, Ramycia McGhee, Chris Van Drimmelen, Steph Newton, Michael Thomson

Councilors absent:

3. Adoption of consent agenda

6:02 p.m.

- a. Appointments
 - 1) Appointments to Citizen Advisory Groups
- b. Approval of minutes
 - 1) February 09, 2026 city council minutes
 - 2) February 11, 2026 city council minutes
 - 3) December 08, 2025 city council joint meeting with Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS)
- c. Recommendation(s) to OLCC
 - 1) Approve Retail on Premises sales and consumption liquor license Sybaris Inc., DBA Sybaris Bistro, Located at 133 5th Avenue SE
- d. Adoption of resolution(s)
 - 1) Certification of Annual Tax Exempt Properties

Lifeskills Geary-RES NO. 7486
Lifeskills Oak-RES NO. 7487
Parkrose-RES NO. 7488
Periwinkle Place-RES NO. 7489
Songbird Village-RES NO. 7490

Item 3B3 was withdrawn from the consent agenda by Councilor Smith.

MOTION: was made by McGhee and seconded by Van Drimmelen to move to adopt the consent agenda, as adjusted. The motion passed 6-0.

Smith said that there were three errors in the joint meeting minutes with GAPS for correction.

Smith noted that Board Member Stephanie Lunceford was not present, on page 15 of the packet/minutes there was a mention of SHARK Foundation it should be Scharpf Foundation; and under the School Resource Officer partnership section two active threat skills, should be changed to two active threat drills.

MOTION: was made by Van Drimmelen and seconded by McGhee to accept the minutes with corrections as identified by Councilor Smith. It passed 6-0.

Public hearing(s)

6:03 p.m.

Zoning Map Amendment Planning File ZC-04-25 530 Columbus Street SE and 2150 5th Avenue SE

Current Planning Manager David Martineau presented.

Johnson opened the public hearing at **6:04 p.m.** and read the standard script.

Conflict of Interest: None declared

Ex-parte Contacts: None declared

Report Site Visits: None

Abstain from proceedings: None

Challenges to Council right to hear the matter: None

Martineau read the meeting procedures.

Martineau said that NC zoning is a good buffer from CC zone to residential zone areas.

Applicant Testimony: 6:08 p.m.

David Dodson, WV Planning said that he was representing the applicant. The client is interested in rezoning because the existing duplex is considered a non-conforming use in the commercial zone, and NC zoning would allow it instead of a non-conforming use.

McLeod asked why this property came to be with current zoning?

Dodson said that the applicant inherited it from family, and is concerned that if the property were to suffer a loss it would be unable to be reconstructed. Additionally NC zoning provides a good transition area from what is a residential area to the north, and the commercial zone to the south.

McLeod asked if the property was in use as a duplex before it was inherited?

Dodson said that the property has been a duplex for a long time.

Public testimony from those who registered to speak: None

Entering exhibits into the record: None

Public Testimony from those who did not register to speak: None

Rebuttal Testimony: None

Johnson closed the public hearing at 6:13 p.m.

Council discussion: None

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the first time in title only.

MOTION: McLeod moved to read the ordinance for the second time in title only. Newton seconded the motion which passed 6-0.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the second time in title only.

MOTION: McLeod moved to adopt the ordinance, Van Drimmelen seconded the motion which passed 6-0. City Recorder Erik Glover conducted a roll call voice vote and the vote was 6-0, Thomson, Smith, Van Drimmelen, Newton, McLeod, McGhee (yes). No- none.

East Albany Town Center-EATC Annexations with Concurrent Map Amendments with Concurrent Map Amendments planning files AN-01-25, CP-03-25, and ZC-03-25

6:17 p.m.

Current Planning Manager David Martineau presented.

Johnson opened the public hearing at 6:18 p.m. and read the standard script.

Conflict of interest: Johnson said that he knew the involved parties from the project via the Tiny Home Village project Hub City and directly talked to staff.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris said that it would not be a conflict of interest.

Ex-parte contact: Johnson said that he talked with involved parties on the project, he shared his vision for the City of Albany with them and he took them on a tour of the city.

Break: Councilor McLeod requested a break/recess at 6:20 p.m.

Reconvene: Meeting resumed at 6:29 p.m.

Johnson said that he wanted to clarify his comments. He has known Darren Nichols for three years. He came to Johnson about the project, and he shared his vision of the project. Johnson introduced him to Community Development Director Matthew Ruetters and his staff. Drawings were returned, and Johnson performed a site visit only seeing the property site where the project would go. Johnson said that he went to the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) and talked to folks there about the project and they seemed pretty excited about it. Johnson said that he did not feel there was a conflict in participating, but some of the council did. He said that he thinks he should step out of the hearing because two years ago a partner was a former campaign manager for Johnson. Additionally, the campaign manager filed a lawsuit against the city during that time, and Johnson stepped away from the dais at that point too. Johnson requested Council President Steph Newton preside over the hearing. Johnson said that this just protects the integrity of the process, and he knows everyone and refereed football for twenty-five years and wanted to do this right.

There was a brief pause/delay with the meeting in session, for the City Manager and Assistant City Attorney to confer.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris conferred with the Mayor. Johnson said that based upon the guidance of the Assistant City Attorney; ex-parte contact/communication did occur, which he already shared. He said he would be asking Newton to takeover the remainder of the hearing so there is no appearance of impropriety.

Johnson left the dais and joined the audience.

Newton took over the hearing as chair.

Challenges to council right to hear the matter: None

Site visits: McLeod said that she drove by the site numerous times over the last few months, and observed the site.

McGhee said that the project is right by her house and she sees it every day.

Martineau read the meeting procedures, and presented the staff report and Powerpoint*.

He said that the East Albany Land Use Plan was adopted in 2023. The areas are designated as commercial, residential medium and low density. The area is roughly in the vicinity of Walmart, behind and to the south and consists of 11 subject properties. The GC designation would go away in favor of Village Center zoning.

Applicant Testimony: 6:42 p.m.

Applicant Darren Nichols spoke.

He said that he was in agreement with the report from staff. He said his company is a housing developer, who strives to provide workforce affordable housing mostly without subsidy. He said that the company looks for communities that are affordable. Nichols said that the property was being considered and the city had done a lot of work on the East Albany Town Center plan and the company realized it was a chance to do something special.

Newton asked about infrastructure improvement for roads, utilities stormwater etc. Nichols said that the development will pay its fair share, the project involves more infrastructure than the city would typically require.

Newton asked about traffic mitigation. Nichols said the company will do everything required.

Nichols said that this step of the process is just the annexation, the next step of the project will be designing it.

Newton asked if market conditions change and the project builds out at a lower intensity how does it impact infrastructure obligations, and will the company be able to carry those? Nichols said that those decisions haven't been made yet.

Nichols said that the council has likely seen conceptual drawings.

Troedsson said that this hearing is on the annexation of the land, not on the specifics of any development.

Nichols said that the land would not be eligible for a project of this scale with Linn County zoning. The city zoning would allow for a development proposal. Nichols left the witness table.

Ruettgers said that this portion of the process is annexation. The developer will enter into an annexation agreement that binds them to plans. He detailed infrastructure improvements, and system development charges.

Newton asked about service costs for police, fire, public works, parks etc. What costs are funded, and is there a gap that will occur.

Ruettgers said that as soon as the property is annexed it bears the city tax. He said that until the property is developed with residents, there is no additional burden until it is complete. Even at full buildout the project won't solve the property tax issue that Oregon has.

Newton asked about property taxes at full build out. Ruettgers said that it depends on what is built, presented plans were just conceptual at this point. The development phase would go through standard land use processes with multiple phases.

Smith said that the council tonight is just discussing the annexation. The annexation automatically triggers property taxes. There will be a difference between farm ground and city urban zoned property. Ruettgers said that was correct.

Thomson asked about transportation improvements and ODOT plans for upgrades to overpasses. Ruettgers said that there have been plans for both overpass interchanges for a couple of decades. There are challenges with it.

Newton asked about the farmworker housing project that is being built, and if they are sharing the road? Ruettgers said that the farm workers housing development is under construction near Goldfish Farm, it is east of the EATC project. The EATC project has been in coordination with that group.

McLeod asked about immediate need for city services once annexed? Ruettgers said there will be no real change until development. The fire services are currently provided by Albany Rural Fire.

Troedsson said that Albany fire already services the area through the rural fire district. The property taxes currently paid go to the rural district, and upon annexation they would go to the city. The police services are currently handled through APD and the county. Each responds based upon who can most appropriately handle it. APD wouldn't refuse a call for service from a property one block outside City limits.

Thomson said that Three Lakes Road is a rural road, and asked if it would see potential increases? Ruetters said that until the development plan is seen the city doesn't know what the impacts are.

Newton asked when the development plan be complete. Ruetters said that the city is just looking at annexing the property right now. It could sit for a while, there is no requirement for immediate development.

Public testimony:

Nicole White spoke on behalf of the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars). She said that the developer presented the idea to them, as they would also be annexed; given a border with the property. The developer has offered the VFW a new location in the development, and the VFW is in support of the annexation.

Entering exhibits into the record: None

Rebuttal Testimony: None

Newton closed the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

The council expressed thoughts on the annexation, population growth, infrastructure, city services, and development.

City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the first time in title only.

MOTION: Smith moved to read the ordinance for the second time in title only. Van Drimmelen seconded the motion. MOTION FAILED 5-1 with Thomson voting no. To have the second reading in the same meeting requires unanimous consent. Council consensus established that it will be brought back date certain/March 11, 2026 council meeting for a second reading.

Troedsson said the second ordinance to withdraw territory from the rural fire district doesn't need to be covered this evening because there was no second reading on the first ordinance.

Mayor Johnson retook the dais at 7:24 p.m.

Public Comment

7:26 p.m.

Mark Stewart- said that the City Council has chosen the least boring time in modern history to be in government. The cost of development on annexed land can literally change overnight based upon if someone tweets something mean to the President of the United States. Stewart said that on the strategic planning discussion, he wondered if there were any plans in place for the midterms if the federal government cancels the democratic process entirely. He asked if there was a plan in place for the homeless population that is going to grow under tariffs.

Remi Hill- submitted written and in person comment* pertaining to chemicals for disinfecting wastewater.

Action Item(s)

Ordinances/Resolutions – Ordinances/Resolutions – Amendment to AMC 15.08.030 – Economic Improvement District Assessment Duration, and setting public hearings for EID formation
7:32 p.m.

Finance Director Jeanna Yeager said that staff discovered that the Albany Municipal Code has a limit of a 3 year term for EID formation. The proposed changes would alter that language to match Oregon Revised Statute which is any term up to 5 years. This change

would keep the code current with any changes to state law, and would reduce an administrative burden in having to reform a district every 3 years.

Smith said that the EIDs take a lot of effort and time to setup, and five years seems to give a bit of breathing room.

Yeager said that was correct, a longer term would also be beneficial for the people that pay the charges.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the first time in title only.

MOTION: Van Drimmelen moved to read the ordinance for the second time in title only. Smith seconded the motion which passed 6-0.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the second time in title only.

MOTION: Van Drimmelen moved to adopt the ordinance. Smith seconded the motion which passed 6-0 and it was designated as ORD NO. 6075.

MOTION: Smith moved to adopt the resolution to set public hearings to consider establishment of a Downtown Voluntary Economic Improvement District. Van Drimmelen seconded the motion which passed 6-0 and it was designated as RES NO. 7491.

**Ordinances – Proposed Amendments to the Albany Municipal Code (AMC) 2.27-
Community Development Commission 7:37 p.m.**

Development Programs Analyst Kaitlin Martin and Comprehensive Planning Manager Anne Catlin presented. Martin said that staff proposed amendments in December. Council requested additional info. Staff returned in January with options for council consideration, and the ordinance was further revised to pickup council consensus. The proposed changes would reduce membership from 10 to 7 to make quorum easier, give each council member 1 appointment, and the mayor would also nominate 1 appointment. The positions would all be at large, three-year terms and term limits would be established of not more than three consecutive three-year terms. Lastly conflict of interest provisions necessary for CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) fund compliance are incorporated.

Martin said that staff initially proposed a longer effective date given the complexity of CDBG funds. Since that time, three resignations have happened reducing filled positions to 7, still with a quorum of 6. Staff is now requesting the ordinance be effective 30 days after adoption/standard adoption.

Thomson said that he feels the proposed changes capture the council discussion. Johnson asked if the terms will be staggered? Catlin said yes it takes place during the standard appointment process.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the first time in title only.

MOTION: Newton moved to read the ordinance for the second time in title only. McLeod seconded the motion which passed 6-0.

Assistant City Attorney Aidan Harris read the ordinance for the second time in title only.

MOTION: Newton moved to adopt the ordinance. McGhee seconded the motion which passed 6-0, and it was designated ORD NO. 6076.

Resolutions – Award of Contract WWTP-26-02, AM-WRF Disinfection Study 7:42 p.m.

City Engineer Staci Belcastro presented. She said that the request was for approval of a contract to Kennedy Jenks for \$200,763 for predesign of the disinfection system at the

wastewater treatment plant. The current system will not meet regulatory requirements for the new discharge permit.

She said an RFP was used, even though the contract amount did not trigger procurement rules to require it.

MOTION: Smith moved to adopt the resolution. Van Drimmelen seconded the motion which passed 6-0, and it was designated as RES NO. 7492.

Business from the Council

8:01 p.m.

Newton said that in 2024 she had concerns about Flock cameras, and a recent report showing that federal immigration accessed LPR (license plate reader) data.

MOTION Newton moved to direct the City Manager, and Albany Police Department to immediately suspend operations of all Flock safety automated license plate reader cameras currently in use, within the City of Albany. Direct staff to take all necessary steps to terminate the city's contract with Flock safety at the earliest lawful opportunity, halt installation of any additional Flock cameras pending further council direction and return to council within 30 days with a public report detailing all agencies that have accessed Albany's Flock data, the number and purpose of searches conducted, all data sharing configurations and agreements, contract termination terms and financial implications, confirmation of data retention and deletion protocol. The motion was seconded by McLeod. Discussion took place.

MOTION: Newton moved to amend the motion that the City of Albany immediately suspend use of all Flock safety cameras and impose a moratorium on further deployment until council adopts a formal surveillance technology policy. The motion was seconded by McLeod. Discussion took place.

Police Chief Marcia Harnden provided a handout*. She said that staff were unable to reproduce what the report says. She provided information about criminal cases that have been assisted by the FLOCK cameras. IT Director Sean Park spoke he said that the Flock infrastructure resides on Amazon Web Services, AWS on GovCloud, it is a more secure platform. Banks and hospitals use them, and he is not aware of any 3rd party analysis on security. Discussion took place.

MOTION: Newton moved to amend her previous council motion to read that the Albany City Council immediately suspend operation of all Flock safety automated license plate reader cameras, pending further council action. Halt the installation of additional cameras and direct staff to obtain independent 3rd party verification of whether Albany's license plate reader data was accessed for immigration related searches, whether any federal or out of state entities accessed Albany's data prior to the disabling of nationwide lookup and the full technical architecture governing the data sharing, until the council votes to resume operations following a public review of that independent verification. The motion was seconded by McLeod.

MOTION passed 4 to 2 (Thomson, Van Drimmelen, McLeod, Newton-yes) (McGhee and Smith no).

MOTION: McGhee moved to have the Oregon Law Center present to the Albany City Council regarding where they got their data from, how it was obtained, and what it was used for. The motion was seconded by VanDrimmelen, MOTION passed. Extended discussion ensued.

McLeod said that she wanted to respond to the public comment by Mark Stewart. In Oregon, mid terms are managed by the Secretary of State and county clerks, not by the president. The Secretary of State is the chief of elections.

McGhee provided an update about recent Albany Visitors Association and other events she attended.

Johnson provided an update about events at Memorial Middle School.

City Manager Reports

8:31 p.m.

City Manager Peter Troedsson shared that the March 23, and March 25th meetings would be cancelled, due to a lack of business.

Next meeting dates

Monday, March 09, 2026; 4:00 p.m. work session

Wednesday, March, 11 2026; 6:00 p.m. meeting

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Erik Glover
City Recorder

Peter Troedsson
City Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. Documents from staff are posted to the website after the meeting. Documents submitted by the public are available by emailing cityrecorder@albanyoregon.org.*