

City of Rockaway Beach

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes



Date: Wednesday, October 9, 2024
Location: Rockaway Beach City Hall, 276 Hwy 101 - Civic Facility

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

McNeilly made a statement regarding deportment, requesting that all people respect those in attendance and the opinions of those with whom they may disagree prior, during and after City business meetings.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Start time: [06:02:26 PM \(00:01:40\)](#)

Council Members Present: Mayor Charles McNeilly; Councilors Penny Cheek, Mary McGinnis, Tom Martine, Kristine Hayes, and Alesia Franken

Staff Present: Luke Shepard, City Manager; and Melissa Thompson, City Recorder; Dan Emerson, Public Works Superintendent; Todd Hesse, Fire Chief; and Kevin Grogan, Sheriff's Deputy

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Start time: [06:02:52 PM \(00:02:06\)](#)

- a. Approval of September 11, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of September 11, 2024 Workshop Minutes
- c. Review of Financial Reports

Martine made a **motion**, seconded by Cheek, to approve the consent agenda.

Hayes inquired about the check register report and then indicated that she would direct her question to the Finance Director.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Cheek, McGinnis, Martine, Hayes, Franken)

Nay: 0

5. PRESENTATIONS, GUESTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. **Presentation – Strategic Plan Update** – Sara Singer Wilson, SSW Consulting

Start time: [06:04:52 PM \(00:04:07\)](#)

Wilson gave a presentation providing an update on the Strategic Plan. She shared the draft mission, vision and values, as well as draft goal areas and outcomes. Wilson explained that the next steps were to finalize the draft and provide for open community review by October 25th, with presentation of the final draft to the City Council on November 13, 2024. Wilson noted that there were strong themes and people in Rockaway Beach want the same things, and hoped it would be memorialized in the plan. Wilson answered clarifying questions for the Council. McGinnis noted the plan was community and staff driven. Hayes noted the City was closed October 25th. Wilson stated they would strive to post the draft online by October 24th. Franken acknowledged the strong citizen involvement. McNeilly commended SSW Consulting for their work on the project.

b. **Presentation - Tillamook County Ballot Measure 29-180 Regarding Public Safety Emergency Communications System** – Doug Olson, Tillamook County Commissioner

Start time: [06:25:30 PM \(00:24:44\)](#)

Olson explained Tillamook County Ballot Measure 29-180 Regarding Public Safety Emergency Communications System. Olson shared a video providing an overview of the current emergency communications system, and the need for the proposed new system. Olson explained the fiscal impact and funding. Olson answered questions from the Council and the public.

6. STAFF REPORTS

a. **Fire Department**

Start time: [06:56:39 PM \(00:55:54\)](#)

Hesse presented his staff report on the activities and operations of the Rockaway Beach Fire Rescue department for the month of September 2024. Hesse encouraged participation in the Great Shakeout on October 17, 2024, the Trunk or Treat event October 26th, and preparedness meetings in November and December. Hesse reminded all to prepare for winter emergencies. Hesse reported that the burn ban was lifted October 5th. He shared advances in the drone program that will aid search and rescue. Hesse answered questions from the Council.

b. **Sheriff's Office**

Start time: [07:13:53 PM \(01:13:07\)](#)

Grogan summarized the Sheriff's Office report for September 2024. McGinnis noted that the incident report is available in the agenda packet online.

c. Public Works

Start time: [07:16:22 PM \(01:15:37\)](#)

Emerson presented his report on recent activities and operations within the Public Works department. Cheek commended Emerson's work.

d. City Manager

Start time: [07:21:09 PM \(01:20:24\)](#)

Shepard gave a presentation, noting that the land use appeal hearing originally on the agenda was rescheduled to a special City Council Meeting on November 20, 2024. Shepard provided updates on Jetty Creek grant funding, the Wayside Beach Access project (on track for November completion), and a staff highlight featuring Finance Director Marni Johnston. Shepard noted that Johnston's cash management would result in a \$200,000 estimated annual increase in dividends. Shepard expressed appreciation for the City Council's support in making Rockaway Beach a desirable place to hire and retain talented staff. Shepard shared public meeting dates in October and November. McGinnis thanked Shepard for hiring quality staff. McNeilly expressed that he was impressed by the team Shepard had built.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None Scheduled

8. CITIZEN INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Start time: [07:31:26 PM \(01:30:40\)](#)

Constance Shimek, County resident, requested that the City Council denounce dirty politics. Shimek expressed concerns related to an email sent by McGinnis to Tillamook County Democrats. Shimek shared additional concerns about McGinnis' Facebook posts.

Beverly Goertzen, resident, expressed that the City has thrived from having a committed Council and Mayor, most capable City Manager, and hardworking staff. She acknowledged McGinnis' contributions to the community.

Leslie Vipond, resident, requested two amendments to the Short Tern Rental (STR) code, to add an exemption for ADA-compliant homes, and to exempt Rockaway Beach resident STR owners from the cap. Vipond submitted written testimony for the record.

Lisa Finkle, resident, commented that she placed an ad independently, unaffiliated with candidates. Finkle asked for review of Transient Room Tax (TRT) funds, expressing concerns about how fireworks expenditures were appropriated.

Goldie See, resident behind Anchor Street Park, expressed thanks for the landscaping installed at Anchor Street Park. See expressed concerns regarding the park lighting, suggesting the glare was too bright and requested that it be shielded. See volunteered to water the park plants.

Trella Reyes, resident, spoke regarding the contentious community. Reyes shared her personal background, and expressed concerns regarding divisiveness, unprofessionalism, and partisan political rancor creating contention in nonpartisan Council races.

Debby Hunn, resident, expressed concerns regarding the budgeting and spending of TRT Funds, referring to her written testimony. Hunn also expressed concerns regarding advertising public works projects in the Daily Journal of Commerce. Hunn questioned whether Tillamook County Pioneer was a legal entity. Hunn shared concerns about acrimony in Rockaway Beach.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None Scheduled

10. NEW BUSINESS – None Scheduled

11. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – None removed

12. COUNCIL CONCERNS

Start time: [07:57:30 PM \(01:56:45\)](#)

Cheek praised the Strategic Plan, commenting that it could bring the community together. Cheek expressed a desire to resolve dissention within the community.

Franken encouraged participation in the Great Shakeout on October 17th. Franken commended the Neah-Kah-Nie Coast Arts & Music Cultural Foundation (NCAM) for their recent event. Franken thanked citizens for their engagement, and acknowledged City departments and staff. Franken thanked McGinnis, stating that she was an upstanding Councilor and was grateful for her leadership.

Hayes shared the front page of Ruralite magazine, which featured the Chamber Caboose and volunteers. Hayes expressed that she looked forward to Trunk or Treat, and that the Chamber was working on historic haunted ghost tours and was seeking volunteers.

Martine commented on former Beach Bakeshop owners and friends who moved to Florida. He shared that they were in the path of the hurricane and requested prayers for them.

McGinnis echoed what Franken shared regarding NCAM, noting that it started with a Community Grant for the Writer’s Rendezvous. McGinnis thanked all involved in the event. McGinnis reported that she attended a meeting regarding the FEMA Biological Opinion (BiOp) and that she joined the

County housing legislative committee. McGinnis mentioned that Rockaway Beach was featured in a World Atlas geography bulletin.

13. MAYOR'S REPORT

Start time: [08:06:21 PM \(02:05:36\)](#)

McNeilly addressed public comments raised regarding City finances, explaining that they are reviewed and shared with City auditors. McNeilly expressed that the City stands firm on solid financial footing, and noted that the annual audit was scheduled for the end of the month. McNeilly stated that a FEMA Biological Opinion (BiOp) information meeting would be held at City Hall on October 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m., and provided background information on the BiOp. McNeilly shared images of brochures and window clings that the Fire Department was creating with the help of Nan Devlin of the Tillamook County Visitor's Association to aid in public safety and emergency preparedness.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Start time: [08:14:20 PM \(02:13:35\)](#)

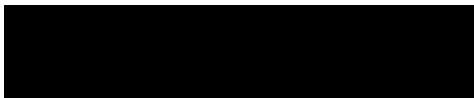
Hayes made a **motion**, seconded by Martine to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Cheek, McGinnis, Martine, Hayes, Franken)

Nay: 0

MINUTES APPROVED THE
13TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2024



Charles McNeilly, Mayor

ATTEST



Melissa Thompson, City Recorder