
CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER GOVERNING BODY

Destiny Jensen At Large, Position 1
Steve Irving - Council President At Large, Position 2
Wes Koklich At Large, Position 3

Mike Odman
John Lyon
Emily Holden
Jose Garcia

Mayor
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3

CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER**October 27, 2025****CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES**

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in a Special Session on Monday, October 27, 2025 in the Albee Room of the City Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Mike Odman, Councilors Steve Irving, Emily Holden, John Lyon, Wes Koklich, Destiny Jensen and Jose Garcia arrived at 6:12 p.m.

Staff members present were: City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Finance Director Laurie Bubar, Library Director Lili Schmidt, Police Chief Joe Shurtz, Fire Chief Shane Garner, Court Clerk Tracy Martinez, Public Works Engineering Technician Steven Patten, Public Works Assistant/Project Aid Krista Gannon, Human Resource Officer Wendi Daugherty and Electric Engineering Technician Tina Kain.

Guests and citizens present were: Tim Johnson, Carol Irving, Bill Daugherty, Saul Gonzalez, Randy Reese, Megan Hoel and Donna Sheridan.

Representing the news media were: Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald and Sheila Hagar of the East Oregonian.

BUSINESS ITEM:**APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDER TO BADGER METER INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$27,104.35**

All city water meters send usage information to billing via cellular transmitters obtained through Badger Meter. Each meter uses one Orion Cellular LTE Service Unit, per month through a sole source vendor. Due to the total dollar amount of the invoice received for projected services from August 2025 through July 2026, staff is required to obtain approval from City Council, as there is no City Manager in place.

Councilor Holden motioned to authorize the Mayor to approve by signature purchase order number 7300 issued to Badger Meter for 29,785 Orion Cellular LTE Service Units at \$.91 per unit, for a total amount of \$27,104.35 from General Ledger Account Number 520-7300-320. Councilor Irving seconded the motion which passed, with Council Garcia being absent for the vote.

CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTING AN INTERIM CITY MANAGER

Mayor Odman, prior to the meeting passed out a resume and draft work program for interim city manager services provided by Tim W. Johnson who the Mayor was recommending to serve as Interim City Manager and an employment agreement provided by City Attorney David Blanc. Mayor Odman introduced Mr. Johnson and provided approximately twenty minutes for the city council to read through the material provided to them. Mayor Odman then provided some background information about Mr. Johnson, of which was included in his resume.

Councilor Irving disclosed that he and the Mayor had reviewed this information a few days ago.

Councilor Jensen stated she felt the choice was already made for them.

Mayor Odman stated the council needed to vote on it.

Mr. Johnson stated he has 44-years' experience in local government, all of which were not in Oregon. He then provided specific work history, of which was provided on his resume.

Councilor Holden asked Mr. Johnson about the formulation of a countywide Homeless Advisory Board listed on his resume and what funding sources were utilized.

Mr. Johnson stated, in summary, homelessness is an issue in Oregon and its unfortunate how many people are really homeless. During the course of his tenure in Lincoln County, he recognized the seriousness level particularly in the county as it pertains to veterans who are homeless and it was quite evident in his examination that there were resources that could be identified, acquired and implemented to help resolve this and at the same time working with the community in Lincoln County. Seven counties came together and they were selected one of eight pilot projects by the state of Oregon which provided over \$1,000,000 over a two-year period.

Councilor Koklich then shared a list of projects he believed the city was behind on.

Mr. Johnson said his intention was to sit down with all the council and to collaborate with the County Commissioners.

Councilor Irving asked Mr. Johnson how soon could he move ahead.

Mr. Johnston stated a short time, about a week.

Councilor Jensen asked Mr. Johnson if he would have the same amount of energy he did with the council, with the department heads and staff. Would he listen and communicate.

Mr. Johnson then shared information regarding a project he implemented for the county fair.

Councilor Jensen stated she wanted to be sure that staff was valued going forward.

Mr. Johnson, in summary, stated there is a program, "Arbitration and Mediation" conference, usually held in California. He said it is a benefit to educate your employees. He provided an example of human resources to attend a similar conference, then come back to the council with a presentation of what was learned.

Councilor Jensen said that human resources needed to be available to employees.

Mr. Johnson said he could take care of that, accountability and transparency.

Human Resource Officer Wendi Daugherty, from the audience, stated she was always available.

Councilor Koklich then spoke about the "Cemetery Bridge" that is outside city limits.

Mr. Johnson stated he has looked at the city audits that are posted on the city website. He commended the community for not spending a lot. He spoke about Urban Renewal Agencies and tax increment Urban Renewal. He said he only has six months here, if appointed.

Mayor Odman stated the interim position would be an at will position. He said he had city attorney David Blanc write up an employment agreement.

Mr. Johnson shared that the League of Oregon Cities has contracts for interims and he would also want his attorney to review any contract.

Councilor Koklich asked Mr. Johnson where would he live.

Mr. Johnson said he could find an Airbnb or a hotel with a monthly rate. Mr. Johnson stated he would not be going on any vacation and would be all in, seven days a week.

Mayor Odman said Mr. Johnson was not looking for benefits or housing and would only receive what was required by Oregon law for benefits.

Mr. Johnson said he does not want to go into OPSRP (Oregon Public Service Retirement Plan) as he is on Medicare, just wants Social Security paid. He said he was surprised that there's not a Health Clinic in Milton-Freewater.

A brief discussion ensued regarding health care facilities.

Mr. Johnson then spoke about GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) and the lack of auditing firms. He said he found a deficiency in the city audit as the software licenses were not listed, which is a must in the audit. He said the auditor didn't call it out. Another requirement is listing all city leases.

Mayor Odman asked if salary could be discussed.

Mr. Johnson said he doesn't usually talk about salary in an open session, that's usually an executive session item.

Mayor Odman asked if the council could go into an executive session.

City Recorder Leanne Steadman stated that discussion of salary was not allowed in executive session.

Mr. Johnson said his expectation would be the salary range of the previous city manager.

Councilor Irving motioned to appoint Tim Johnson as Interim City Manager for a period of 6-months with the flexibility to extend if necessary. Councilor Holden seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Councilor Irving stated that he, Councilor Holden and the Mayor could sit down and negotiate salary and benefits.

Mr. Johnson stated sometime in the next week he would send the Mayor his contract and the Mayor could send the contract the city attorney wrote up. He could start in a week to ten days. Mr. Johnson

also suggested since he was staying over, he could meet with all the staff the next morning or afternoon. He could even buy lunch.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Mike Odman, Mayor