
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 Mayor
John Lyon Ward 1
Emily Holden Ward 2
Jose Garcia Ward 3

CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER

April 13, 2026

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, April 13, 2026 in the Albee Room of the City Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue at 7:00 p.m.

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

Staff members present were: Interim City Manager Tim Johnson, City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Finance Director Laurie Bubar, Police Chief Joe Shurtz, Library Director Lili Schmidt, Fire Chief Shane Garner, Electric Superintendent Richard Jolly, Public Works Engineering Technician Steven Patten, Facilities Maintenance Worker Jorge Estrada and Public Works Supervisor Nathan Lyon.

Guests and citizens present were: Connie Vinti, Annie Pankratz, Paul Seaquist, Tammy Seaquist, Jan Sample, Gerry Seagrave, Sally Babcock, Larry Estes, Laurel Estes, Kenneth Jenkins, John Mitchell, Randy Reese, Jennifer LeBlanc, Jon Mendez and John Wells with Anderson Perry. Via conference phone was Sheila Hagar, Barbara Chadek and Krista Gannon.

Representing the news media was: Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald via conference phone.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of:

- Regular Session Minutes from March 9, 2026
- Special Session Minutes from March 23, 2026
- Work Session Minutes from March 23, 2026
- Library Board Minutes from January 22, 2026
- Recreation Committee Minutes from February 3, 2026
- February 2026 Financial Reports
- Aquatic Center Winterization and Repair Work in Preparation of 2026 Season

Councilor Irving stated the report on the aquatic center winterization and repair work was well written and he agreed the repair worked needed to be done.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve all items on the Consent Calendar. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION ITEM:

MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION – MILTON-FREEWATER GARDEN CLUB CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mayor Mike Odman presented a “Mayor’s Proclamation” for the Milton-Freewater Garden Club’s 90th year of providing service. There are currently five members, three were in attendance at the

meeting; President Gerry Seagrave, Secretary/Treasurer Connie Vinti and Past President Jan Sample. Those current members not present were Vice Present Linda Meier and Parliamentarian Ellen Hallmark.

UPDATE – WATER SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

John Wells of Anderson Perry presented a water system capital improvement plan which included a description of the projects and preliminary project costs. The total estimated cost, using the current year 2026 estimates, totaled \$65,505,000. Mr. Wells presentation also included approximate timeline of the projects.

Councilor Koklich asked if extending the water infrastructure to the north to Stateline was included in one of the plans.

Mr. Wells replied, yes it was.

A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Wells stated they will continue on finalizing the draft report and will be bringing it back to council for consideration of adoption in a few months.

INFORMATION – FLEET MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Interim City Manager Tim Johnson presented a Fleet Management Strategy plan. Included in the presentation was; the evaluation of current inventory, review of existing replacement plans and activities, provided an updated replacement plan criterion, provided a recommendation of enhanced budget requests as well as establishing a fleet management and maintenance policy. His formal recommendations to the city council were; to consult with an association such as American Public Works Association, (AWPA) which the city is a member of, to help assist the city in pursuing an effective and efficient process for fleet management and maintenance, initiate analysis of different software for the purpose of vehicle and equipment management and formulation and adoption of a Fleet Management and Maintenance Policy. He stated this matter will go before the council during the budget process.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

RESOLUTION NO. 2595, MAKE APPROPRIATIONS DUE TO UNFORESEEN REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Finance Director Laurie Bubar presented budget appropriations that were necessary to stay in compliance with local budget law. There were adjustments proposed for the following funds; aquatic center, public works administration, public buildings, city hall contingency, city manager, and accounting and billing. Ms. Bubar clarified that in the event the adjustment to the accounting and billing fund/city hall fund was not needed, she would leave the funds in the city hall contingency. This adjustment was in regards to the Interim City Manager hiring from a temporary agency an individual to assist with updating and enhancing the FY27 proposed budget.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2595, Resolution to Make Appropriations due to Unforeseen Revenues and Expenditures. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF UPDATED LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN & MISSION STATEMENT

Library Director Lili Schmidt presented an updated Library Strategic Plan & Mission Statement. The updated plan outlined outreach programs, events, collections and displays. Also presented was the library's vision statement, "A community where everyone is safe to learn, play, create and belong" and their mission statement, "To inspire lifelong curiosity, the library provides practical & diverse resources, inclusive spaces, and expert staff, empowering our community to meet a changing world with creativity and confidence." She then introduced the library members in attendance; Laurel Estes, Randy Reese and Jennifer LeBlanc.

Councilor Lyon motioned to approve updated Library Strategic Plan & Library Mission Statement to be implemented from April 2026 – April 2030. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH BODYCAM FEES

Police Chief Joe Shurtz requested to establish fees regarding public records requests for police officer body-worn camera footage. He shared the Oregon Revised Statutes numbers that govern public records requests and redaction. He explained he reviewed other agencies fees from Portland to Hermiston and believed what he was proposing was reasonable. The new fees were as follows: Bodycam with USB drive or e-mail link to video = \$30 each, plus \$25 per hour for redaction, thumb drive = \$10.00 and USB – photos/911 calls/radio traffic = \$25 plus \$25 per hour for staff time.

Councilor Holden asked if there was a clause to waive a fee for a victim that has requested documents.

Chief Shurtz stated if they were a victim, the record(s) were usually given to them free of charge.

Councilor Lyon asked about the bodycam policy.

Chief Shurtz stated there was a policy in place which was drafted from Lexipol. The policy was provided to council via email in March. Lexipol provides specialized policy management including law enforcement to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

A discussion ensued regarding the policy and if council should have adopted it.

Interim City Manager Tim Johnson clarified the subject matter being asked to voted on was the establishment of fees as it related to public records requests for bodycams.

Councilor Jensen motioned to establish fees associated with body-worn camera requests as presented. Councilor Irving seconded the motion with Councilors Garcia, Irving, Koklich and Jensen voting in favor of the motion and Councilors Holden and Lyon voting against the motion. The motion passed by majority.

AUTHORIZATION TO HIRE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE TO FILL THE POSITION OF ELECTRIC ASSISTANT/PROJECT AIDE

Electric Superintendent Richard Jolly requested authorization to fill the position of Electric Assistant/Project Aide. The position of Electric Assistant has been vacant since January 15, 2026. The position has been filled temporarily.

Councilor Lyon asked if someone retired that left the position empty.

Mr. Jolly stated the last assistant resigned.

Councilor Lyon asked why the bump, and why not replace the Electric Assistant position with an Electric Assistant. He asked why was it being recommend as an Electric Assistant/Project Aide.

Mr. Jolly stated due to the applicant's knowledge and there was no cross training with the previous assistant and his recommendation was to fill the Assistant/Project Aide with the person who once filled that position.

Councilor Lyon asked if the position was being filled with someone who had previously retired.

Mr. Jolly replied, yes.

Councilor Lyon motioned to authorize Interim City Manager to hire full-time employee to fill the position of Electric Assistant/Project Aide in accordance with the established pay scale recommended by the Electric Department Superintendent Richard Jolly. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

ADOPTION OF SUBSTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN AS OUTLINED IN WORK SESSION ON MARCH 23, 2026

Public Works Superintendent Richard Jolly recommended the city council adopt the plans presented to them at the Work Session on March 23, 2026 for upgrade improvements to the Freewater and Milton substations. In summary those upgrades included; for Milton Substation – replace the transruptor with a circuit switcher or breaker, replace 15/20/25 power transformer with a 25/33/42 power transformer, upgrade foundation and oil containment system, change the size and configuration of the bus work and associated switches and CT's, and replace voltage regulators, install modular control building, upgrade relays, controls and SCADA – for Freewater Substation – reuse existing Milton Substation transformer to replace T1, replace high-voltage fuse protection with 69kv breakers or circuit switchers, upgrade foundation, oil containment and upgrade relays and look into possible siting of another substation.

Councilor Lyon asked where the money would come from.

Mr. Jolly stated he wanted an approved plan to be able to go forward with the purchasing of the new transformer, he wanted to get in line since the estimated lead time was two years. He will be presenting a recommendation of transferring some funds from the electric reserve fund in the FY27 budget.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt the Substation Improvement Plan as outlined by Richard Jolly by substation. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH THE COUNCIL WITH ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

Tammy Seaquist, 684 College Street – expressed concerned about the fence along Dehaven Street was not holding up the hillside. She said it should have been a wall and not a fence.

Interim City Manager Tim Johnson said he would look into it.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Johnson reported he submitted two managers reports, which were included in the city council packet. These reports covered the time period of March 1 – 15, and March 16-28, 2026. These reports will be posted on the city website under the “City Manager” tab. He thanked Councilors Lyon and Koklich for helping with graffiti cover up. He reported staff has submitted grants in the amount of \$20 million dollars.

Councilor Jensen said she was willing to help with graffiti cover up in the future.

Mayor Odman said he noticed the golf course nets by the 2nd hole and tennis courts still needed to be replaced.

Manager Johnson replied that all the nets the city had were installed. He thanked the electric crew for helping get them replaced. He reported structural engineer bids have been received for the replacement of the scoreboard at the ballfield. This may not be installed until the end of their season.

Mayor Odman asked for an update on the city manager recruitment.

Manager Johnson said the recruitment went live on the SGR website on April 13, 2026 and the deadline is the middle of May.

Councilor Lyon asked for an update on the public works superintendent recruitment.

Manager Johnson said Jensen Strategies was chosen, but nothing has been done on it. He said to wait and see what the next city manager wants for a public works superintendent and community development director.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Koklich shared he liked the report on the aquatic center.

Manager Johnson thank the public works staff for all their help with the aquatic center especially Nathan Lyon and Shane Wright who repaired the outside shower. The first week in May the pool will be emptied and any repairs done before refilling it for the season. The sign located outside the pool will be updated this week. He then handed out a map depicting drought conditions across the United States.

Councilor Jensen thanked 911 Dispatchers as it was a day of honor.

Councilor Lyon stated he received an email requesting the council meetings be live streamed.

Mayor Odman said it was being worked on. He shared Joe Humbert passed away and the Aquatic Center was named after him.

Manager Johnson said he would plan something in honor of Mr. Humbert.

Mayor Odman reported the National Fitness Network, which is an outdoor fitness center, was interested in the Milton-Freewater community.

Manager Johnson shared they have reached out to staff with a request for the city to submit a grant application with them.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Approved May 11, 2026

Mike Odman, Mayor