CITY OF WINSTON, OREGON

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

November 2, 2026

1. Meeting Information

Meeting	Winston City Council Regular Meeting
Date	Monday, November 2, 2026
Time	Called to order at 7:00 PM; recessed to executive session; reconvened and adjourned at 8:47 PM
Location	Winston City Hall
Presiding Officer	Christie Knutson, Mayor
Prepared By	Transcription Record
Status	Draft — Pending Approval at Next Regular Meeting

2. Attendance

Council

Name	Role	Status
Mayor Knutson	Mayor / Presiding Officer	Present
Nicholas Wiggins	Council Member	Present
Allen Hobson	Council Member	Present
Dorie White	Council Member	Present
Dave Cunningham	Council Member	Present

Staff and Others Identified

- Thomas McIntosh — City Manager
- Andy Howell — Public Works Superintendent
- Chief Rob Bullock — Central Douglas Fire & Rescue
- Steve Johnson — Christmas ornament project volunteer
- Members of the public providing testimony: Terry Fink, Emily McCurry, Doris Boyd

3. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance, and roll call was taken with all four Councilors and the Mayor present.

3.1 Adjustments to the Agenda

City Manager Thomas McIntosh presented two additions:

- Under Section 3 (Boards, Commissions, Committees and Schools): add a third item — a Christmas event fee waiver request from WAID.
- Under Non-Agenda Items from Council: a Christmas teen event outfit discussion from the Mayor.

Mr. McIntosh noted that he prepared tonight's agenda in the absence of the staff member who usually does, and took responsibility for any errors in it.

4. Comments from the Audience

The Mayor read the standing public comment rules.

4.1 Traffic and Public Safety Committee — Teri Fink, Winston

Teri Fink, current chair of the Traffic and Public Safety Committee, announced that the chair's term ends at the end of the year and that Fink will not reapply. Key points:

- Fink described a lack of support for the committee: meetings are rarely announced, the chair learned of the last meeting by phone, and the newsletter lists meetings on Tuesdays when they are held on the second Monday.
- A Traffic Committee meeting listed on tonight's agenda for November 23 is not real; Fink confirmed with staff that no such meeting is scheduled. The committee meets quarterly; the next meeting would be January.
- The committee's last meeting (the prior Monday) lacked a quorum. There is one existing vacancy, which becomes two with her departure.
- Municipal Code section 31.067 (as transcribed) requires the committee to exist as long as the city has a public safety fee, and its primary charge is public safety fee issues — a topic that has never come before the committee in Fink's nearly three years.
- Fink is frustrated by unreliable speed data. The speed trailer is old, and the two new digital speed signs register readings when no vehicles are present. When the trailer was placed in front of Fink's home, pedestrians registered 5–16 mph (a family with a stroller registered 12–16 mph while running), which skews the 85th-percentile speed data used for speed limits.
- The Police Chief has not attended recent meetings due to his shift; a Police Sergeant has attended the last two meetings.
- In Fink's view the committee's accomplishments have been replacing items that should have been maintained anyway (stop bars near schools, a speed limit sign), and Fink questions whether the committee is needed.

Mr. McIntosh acknowledged that staff has struggled to support the committee, as with the former park board and the current Economic Development Committee, and said this is not a reflection on Fink's service. He said the new Park Advisory Committee format is serving as a template that staff would like to apply to other boards, commissions and committees, including Traffic and Public Safety. Council thanked Terry Fink for the service provided. No other members of the public spoke.

5. Reports — Boards, Commissions, Committees and Schools

5.1 Park Advisory Committee Report

Public Works staff (Andy) reported on the committee's second meeting, held October 19. The committee is getting new members up to speed and requested Public Works' top priorities for each park:

- Boat ramp: parking and striping; a possible summer-only dry camping area. Any changes must protect the Oregon State Marine Board grant (about $4,100 per year), and the site is an archaeological area where digging is restricted.
- Pocket park (vacant lot off Cary with a sewer line through it): options include a fence, a basketball hoop, or leasing or selling the property. Vehicles still occasionally park on it.
- Civic Park: an ADA-compliant water fountain; space is too limited for a restroom.

- Riverbend Park: playground replacement is the top priority; also renovate the restrooms, repair the pavilion roof, and address birds damaging the stage structure (netting is an option, at a cost).
- Community Park: restroom replacement.

Riverbend Park playground: a Playcraft representative (a certified playground inspector) raised safety concerns involving pull-up bars, concrete, tree roots and fencing. Preparing the chosen site will require removing the wood chips, buried concrete footings from the old playground (about 36 inches deep), and repairing the damaged fence, which has been struck by vehicles at least four times. A new water line has been installed at the park, which should reduce the high water bill; the original leak was never located, though several smaller leaks in mixed old piping were found.

Other items: reported "speed bumps" in Community Park are actually roots from a large pine tree. Onikka Driscoll reported that Thundering Waters offered to donate a bike track (about 55 × 23 feet, valued at $40,000) needing a flat permanent site; staff will review. Staff met with a Seven Feathers representative on Friday about possible funding.

Council discussion: Councilor White, who toured the site, urged keeping the tree for shade, suggested smoothing the raised concrete rather than replacing it, and questioned why all the wood chips must be removed rather than topped up given the tight budget. She reported that a tree sample was evaluated and the roots generally run no deeper than about 24 inches. Staff explained the roots are numerous and anchor the tree, so cutting them risks the tree falling, and that the inspector requires excavation to native soil for insurance coverage. Council agreed no one wants to remove the tree; that would be a last resort. Concrete barriers or boulders in front of the playground were suggested as an inexpensive way to protect children and the fence from vehicles. Staff welcomed the open discussion process.

5.2 Approval of Park Advisory Committee Minutes — October 19, 2026

Staff noted that minutes from Council's own previous meeting are not yet available; a collection of outstanding minutes will be presented at the next meeting. Council acted on the Park Advisory Committee minutes of October 19.

Motion	Mover / Second	Aye	No	Abstain / Recused	Result
Approve the Park Advisory Committee minutes of October 19, 2026	Cunningham/White	Aye	None voiced	None	PASSED

5.3 Fee Waiver Recommendations (Added Item) — Staff Report, Andy

At its October 19 meeting the Park Advisory Committee received two requests for 100% fee waivers on the Community Center Grand Room:

Requester	Event / Date	Standard Fee	Committee Recommendation
Winston-Dillard Seniors	Food pantry fundraiser, 11/28/26	$275	Reduce to $55
WAID	Christmas event, 12/11/26	$495	Reduce to $105
Total		$770	$160

The committee's recommendations were based on a then-available daily average cost of $101.44 (one staff hour $48.04, Pacific Power $40.00, water $6.15, supplies $7.25). Since then Public Works has completed a more detailed cost analysis.

Staff confirmed the Winston-Dillard Seniors event has moved to the VFW, so only the WAID request needed action. A motion to reduce the WAID fee to $105 was made and carried (see vote table below).

City Manager McIntosh noted that, in contrast to recent full-waiver requests, the committee recommended partial waivers. Community Center revenue is a little over $82,000 against a budget of $112,241, requiring about $36,000 from an already strained General Fund. Public Works' detailed figures, read into the record by a Councilor:

Measure	Cost to Operate	Revenue
Yearly	≈ $77,260	$43,885
Monthly	$6,438.41	$3,657.13 (rental agreements)
Daily average	$228.29	$121.96

Discussion highlights:

- One Councilor recalled that Council had previously discussed limiting waivers to 50%, so applicants such as a 501(c)(3) Christmas party serving less-fortunate children would not have to divert gift money to room rental.
- Ideas raised included a limited number of first-come waivers per year, a sliding scale or matrix based on the renter (nonprofit vs. well-funded), and a floor of at least the daily operating cost (about $228). Staff said the Park Advisory Committee could develop a policy.
- Doris Boyd, Winston, noted that at roughly $200+ per day in costs, any rental below that deepens the deficit.
- Cost reduction: Councilors suggested solar panels (citing an Energy Trust of Oregon–supported array at the Phoenix alternative school) and Pacific Power HVAC add-on programs. Staff said the five commercial HVAC units are over 20 years old; Energy Trust incentives were explored but the city lacked funds for qualifying units, and a past roof study raised weight concerns for solar. Annual energy cost is roughly $18,000–$20,000. Staff has already cut water costs (from $800–$900 per month) by installing a smaller 2-inch meter, decommissioned an unused walk-in freezer (saving about $150 per month), and tightened supply tracking.
- Councilor Cunningham asked about a surcharge on the Winston Sanitary. Staff said such options are under discussion.

Donation offer: Emily McCurry, a Winston resident who said she paid full price to rent the Community Center herself, offered to donate half of the $495 fee on behalf of Safari Village Real Estate if Council waived the other half, so the Community Center receives the full $495. A motion to accept the offer carried, superseding the earlier $105 motion.

Motion	Mover / Second	Aye	No	Abstain / Recused	Result
Reduce the WAID Christmas event Grand Room fee to $105	Not named / Not named	Aye (count not stated)	None voiced	None	PASSED — superseded
Accept the donation offer: Council waives 50% of the $495 fee; donor pays the remaining 50%	Not named / Not named	Aye (count not stated)	None voiced	None	PASSED

5.4 Park Advisory Committee Policy Recommendation (2021 Recommendation 21-01)

Staff reported that in 2021 the original park board submitted Recommendation 21-01: reduced fees may be requested, but must cover the city's actual costs (setup, maintenance and repairs) as determined by Public Works, and full waivers should be replaced with actual-cost charges. The new Park Advisory Committee agrees with that recommendation. Staff noted that after 2021 the board reverted to recommending full waivers, which exceeded $15,000 in approved waivers.

Councilor Cunningham asked whether this would prevent waivers in unusual circumstances (for example, the death of a prominent official). Staff answered that Council retains final authority; the policy would set the default toward collecting fees, with partial or full waivers still possible by committee recommendation. Staff noted the $228.29 daily cost is conservative (based on one staff hour per day; staff average about 963 hours per year at the facility).

6. Department Reports

6.1 Public Works — Andy Howell

- Paving is complete on Jole Allen/Tokay, including drainage work.
- A section on Hart was paved after installing a new manhole and new sewer line connections.
- Two manholes on the main trunk line from the Parkway pump station, off Evergreen, are scheduled for installation, with at least one expected this week.
- Fastening the grate covers in a previously discussed location is planned but not yet done.

6.2 Administration — Thomas McIntosh: Christmas Ornament Project

Mr. McIntosh and Steve Johnson reported on the light-pole Christmas ornament project:

- Pacific Power (PP&L) approved the permit for mounting on power poles under its in-kind program, but only a handful of poles were approved this year due to restrictions.
- The snowflake template and a load of flat bar were delivered to the high school, where students are building the pieces. Six rope lights at $45 each have been requested for purchase.
- The main obstacle is getting power to the poles. With about 20 days remaining, the city's electrician (Thor Anderson) has not received required information from Pacific Power. Mr. Johnson cautioned that the decorations may not go up this year, though he could finish pieces by December 1 if the school delivers them.
- Pacific Power contact Sam Carter has been responsive; staff and shop teacher Mr. Alvey will keep pressing.

7. Old Business

None.

8. New Business

8.1 Ordinance No. 26-726 — Burn Regulations Amendment (Third Reading)

Read by title only by Mr. McIntosh: an ordinance amending Title 9 of the Winston Municipal Code, section 90.036(b)(1) (as read), to provide that applicable Douglas Forest Protection Association (DFPA) burn bans take precedence over municipal burning allowances.

Staff report: the ordinance keeps the city's existing burn months (April, May, October and November) but adds a DFPA burn ban supremacy clause. If a DFPA ban is in effect, no burning is allowed even within those months; once DFPA lifts the ban, the city's existing rules apply.

Chief Bullock, Central Douglas Fire & Rescue, explained:

- The change resolves conflicts at city boundaries during fire season, when county residents are barred from burning under a DFPA ban but city residents were not (for example, burning began on October 1 this year despite fire danger).
- Burning guidance, including covering piles so they stay dry, is posted online, but the district cannot force compliance. State law permits yard-debris burning outside a ban; air-quality-based restrictions such as those in the Eugene area require state-level action.
- The fire district will extinguish prohibited burns (trash, burn barrels, night burning) and notify the city's compliance officer; for permitted-but-noncompliant yard debris burns it will notify the compliance officer. Agricultural burning follows separate permit rules.
- DFPA citations during fire season range from small amounts up to about $50,000, escalating for repeat offenses.
- Residents should report smoke or illegal burns through 911 or the non-emergency dispatch line rather than calling a fire station directly, so the nearest available unit is dispatched.

Council discussion: Councilors described heavy smoke throughout the past week and health impacts on residents. They asked about enforcement given the compliance officer's limited hours (no evenings or weekends). Staff said fire district reports will be treated as formal complaints and can be cited after the fact, and that education and a

stronger citation process are the main tools. Councilor White asked to hold the item for further review; the motion proceeded.

Motion	Mover / Second	Aye	No	Abstain / Recused	Result
Adopt Ordinance No. 26-726 (third reading)	Hobson/Cunningham	4	1 White	None	PASSED

8.2 Ordinance No. 26-727 — Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map Amendment (First Reading)

Read by title only: an ordinance amending the comprehensive plan map and zoning map for approximately 73.44 acres at the corner of Brockway Road and Oregon Highway 42, applicant Birch Springs LLC, File No. 25-W014.

Mayor Knutson and Councilor Wiggins recused themselves because they were absent from the October public hearing on this application.

Staff report (Mr. McIntosh): the October public hearing addressed a plan amendment and zone change only; it does not approve development. The change makes the property compatible with future development. The packet indicates a proposal for apartment complexes and a small subdivision on the south end. The long-vacant parcel was once part of the late-1990s Brockway Resort proposal, which never materialized. The developer has built similar market-rate apartments elsewhere (Roseburg/Diamond Lake, Cottage Grove, Springfield, Eugene) and does not use subsidized housing programs. The ordinance includes seven conditions, with a Planning Commission modification to Condition 5. Staff recommended approval and forwarding to a second reading. No public comment was offered.

Motion	Mover / Second	Aye	No	Abstain / Recused	Result
Adopt Ordinance No. 26-727 (plan amendment and zone change) on first reading and forward to second reading	Cunningham/Hobson	Aye	None voiced	Recused: Mayor Knutson, Councilor Wiggins	PASSED (first reading)

9. Upcoming Agenda Items

None at this time.

10. Non-Agenda Items from Council

10.1 Christmas Party Costumes — Mayor

The Mayor reported that the teen center will not be open or provide costumes for the Community Christmas Party this year. She arranged for the high school to bake cookies for the tree lighting and Christmas party again, donating $100 personally. A high school student will attend Coffee with Christy on Saturday to discuss recruiting teen volunteers.

She proposed buying ten inflatable, one-size-fits-all Christmas costumes (seven designs, including Christmas trees, reindeer, a polar bear, a penguin, gingerbread men and a snowman) for $298.83, and asked whether the city could fund them from a relief fund so they arrive before the December 5 party.

Doris Boyd, Winston, suggested local business sponsorship and volunteered to solicit sponsors, noting her own experience organizing donated events with a chamber of commerce. Mr. McIntosh suggested involving the Winston Chamber of Commerce. Council discussed having the city purchase immediately for speed, with sponsorship reimbursing the city.

Outcome: Ms. Boyd will come to City Hall for a Chamber contact and a flyer, with sponsorships targeted by the following Monday. Staff will identify a line item so the city can purchase in time. No formal motion was taken.

10.2 Traffic and Public Safety Committee

Councilor Cunningham raised concerns about the speed data and whether the committee is needed. Staff noted the committee is required while the public safety fee exists, though Council could amend that ordinance language; a restructure along the lines of the Park Advisory Committee is an option. Mr. McIntosh said the skewed speed data was news to him and staff will follow up internally. Councilors added that a digital speed sign did not register a car below 18 mph and reportedly stops counting at 35 mph.

The item will be placed on the November 16 agenda. Staff noted November and December agendas are usually light around the holidays, but the November 16 meeting will proceed. Terry Fink said the January committee meeting will not be held without a chair, and offered to remain available informally past the current term but not for a new three-year term.

11. Good of the Order / Announcements

- Checks, copies and claims over $500 are in the Council packets.
- Coffee with Christy is coming up on November 7th; cookies will be provided.
- Friends of the Winston Library meeting November 11th at 11. Winston Library.
- Veterans Day is November 11. City flags are to be displayed on Veterans Day.
- Next City Council meeting: November 16, 2026.
- The Economic Development Committee meeting was canceled because it fell on a national holiday and is postponed.

12. Executive Session

Mr. McIntosh announced an executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(h) to consult with legal counsel regarding the Council's legal rights and duties concerning current litigation or litigation likely to be filed, expected to last 5–10 minutes. The City Manager and Public Works Superintendent Andy Howell remained. The audience was excused.

13. Consolidated Voting Summary

Item	Description	Vote	Result
PAC Minutes	Park Advisory Committee minutes, October 19, 2026	Aye; none opposed	PASSED
Fee Waiver	Reduce WAID Christmas event fee to $105	Aye; none opposed	PASSED — superseded
Fee Waiver	Accept donor offer: 50% waived, 50% paid by donor (city receives $495)	Aye; none opposed	PASSED
Ord. 26-726	Burn regulations — DFPA burn ban precedence (third reading)	Majority Aye; 1 No	PASSED
Ord. 26-727	Plan/zone map amendment, ~73.44 acres, Brockway Rd & OR-42 (first reading)	Aye; Mayor Knutson and Councilor Wiggins recused	PASSED to second reading

14. Action Items & Follow-Up

Action Item	Responsible Party	Deadline / Status
Place Traffic and Public Safety Committee restructure/discussion on agenda	Staff / City Manager	November 16, 2026, meeting
Investigate accuracy of speed trailer and digital speed sign data	City Manager / Police Dept.	Follow-up in progress
Publish non-emergency dispatch number	Thomas McIntosh	Upcoming newsletter
Coordinate burn enforcement between fire district and compliance officer	City / Central Douglas Fire & Rescue	Ongoing
Develop fee waiver policy or matrix (per Recommendation 21-01)	Park Advisory Committee	Not specified
Pursue Community Center cost reductions (HVAC incentives, solar feasibility)	Public Works / Administration	Ongoing
Riverbend Park playground site preparation; evaluate tree preservation and vehicle barriers	Public Works / Park Advisory Committee	Before next season
Review Thundering Waters bike track donation	Park Advisory Committee / Public Works	Not specified
Secure power to poles for Christmas ornaments; purchase six rope lights	City Manager / Steve Johnson / electrician	Approx. 20 days (early December)
Display city flags on Veterans Day	Staff	November 11, 2026

15. Adjournment

Council reconvened in open session at 8:47 PM following the executive session, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Certification

These minutes are a draft record of the Winston City Council meeting held on November 2, 2026, reconstructed from an audio transcript, and are subject to review and approval at a subsequent regular meeting.

Christie Knutson

Christie Knutson, Mayor

Thomas McIntosh

Thomas McIntosh, City Manager