

**City of Rainier  
City Council Meeting  
April 6, 2026  
6 p.m.  
Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the council meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**Council Present:** Scott Cooper, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger, Paul Langner, Charleen Ratkie and Denise Watson

**Council Absent:** Robert duPlessis

**City Attorney Present:** No

**City Staff Present:** Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Russ Reigel, Public Works Director

**Flag Salute**

**Additions/Deletions from the Agenda:** Councilor Denise Watson said she wanted to add REDCO Revenue Recovery for Dissolution to the agenda under New Business. Councilor Charleen Ratkie moved to add that item. That motion was seconded by Watson. Councilors Scott Cooper, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger, Paul Langner, Ratkie and Watson all voted in favor. None were opposed.

**Mayor's Address:** Cole read proclamations into the record in support of Save Soil and HOPE.

**Student Awards Presentation:** Awards were presented to Rainier High School's senior Rho Kappa and Rainier Middle School's Rho Kappa Honor Society members, as well as members of the History Club and organizations that have supported it.

**Visitor Comments:** Janet Nelson requested speed bumps or traffic calming on West A Street in front of the park. Kim O'Brien said Rainier Little League plans to apply for a grant to pave around the dugouts, add netting and some lighting. Cole encouraged her to apply for the grant.

**Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda**

Consider Approval of the March 2, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and Monthly Financial Statements—Cooper moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Howell. Watson expressed concern about the manner in which moorage fees are distributed within the city budget. Cooper, Howell, Kreger, Langner and Ratkie all voted in favor of the motion. Watson was opposed.

**New Business**

a. Fee Discussion—Cole said he wanted to separate discussion of rates from fees. He wants tampering to be treated as theft of service, instead of having a fee for it. Cole created a form to provide justification for any proposed fee increases and went over it. City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said he supports the form. He and Police Chief Gregg Griffith reviewed the city's municipal code and found a portion from 1968 that sets a \$500 fine for meter tampering. He can look into having those cited into the City's municipal court as a violation. The City has

referred cases of tampering to the District Attorney's office for prosecution for theft of service, but those cases are not prioritized by that agency. Ratkie asked about comparables to fees charged by other local cities. Jorgensen said he has those and can share them. Langner said the fee discussion was never intended as a money grab but as a conversation starter, and that he likes the form. Cole opened up public comment on the matter. Michael Self said he supports Cole's approach and that there needs to be transparency. He agrees that the boat launch fee should be increased. Jorgensen said the City needs to charge enough to cover the cost of providing services. If the City waits too long to cover the costs of maintaining the boat launch and marina facilities, it runs the risk of having deferred maintenance beyond the point of being able to afford fixing them. Cole asked if the business license fees can be consolidated. Jorgensen said he would like that. Langner suggested that the Revenue Committee look separately at fees, rates and System Development Charges, develop recommendations, then bring them back to council for a work session. Kreger said costs have gone up. The City needs to maintain its infrastructure and cover its costs. Cole said that septage revenue was bringing in around \$250,000 in revenue to the City per year. That helped keep sewer rates low. When the centrifuge broke at the wastewater plant, the City couldn't take septage anymore. But not taking septage made it easier to keep the plant operating in regulatory compliance. Staff is looking into what it would take to add a screw press to the wastewater plant so the City can take septage again and receive that revenue. Self said he supports adding a screw press to the wastewater plant and added that most local mills use them.

b. Tree Removal Request—Jorgensen said Langner and Reigel reviewed the request and determined that the tree is not on private property, but a public right of way. Staff has no objections to the request. Langner moved to approve the request. That motion was seconded by Cooper. Cooper, Howell, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson voted in favor. None were opposed.

c. Planning Commission Appointment—Howell moved to appoint Dennis O'Brien to the Planning Commission. That motion was seconded by Watson. Cooper, Howell, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson voted in favor. None were opposed.

d. Resolution 26-04-01—Authorizing the City of Rainier to Apply for a Local Government Grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for the Rainier Eagles Skate Park Project and Delegating Authority to the Mayor to Sign the Application—Langner moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Kreger. Cooper, Howell, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson voted in favor. None were opposed.

e. Street Sweeping Contract—Cole said he and Councilor Robert duPlessis have been discussing street sweeping. They want 24-hour notice for rescheduling so sweeping dates can be made public to inform residents. Jorgensen said he discovered the City didn't have an official contract with Cowlitz Clean Sweep. That company sent over the draft contract included in the packet. He can reach out to Cowlitz Clean Sweep to try and address the notification issues.

f. REDCO Revenue Recovery for Dissolution—Cole suggested that Watson, Langner and Cooper do further research on the subject. When REDCO dissolves, all of its assets go to the City. But that dissolution is at least a couple of years away from happening.

## **8. Unfinished Business**

a. Council Goals for 2026-27—Council agreed by consensus to table this matter to the next meeting.

b. Wastewater Plant MAO—Reigel said that there is a July 17 deadline to submit the flow monitoring data to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The City has a September 25 deadline to make the collection system repairs included in the MAO. The only work that hasn't already been done is the manhole rehabilitation, which is scheduled for the following week. A rebuild of a filter at the plant will be starting soon.

**9. Reports**—Griffith said the police department still has a vacancy. Jorgensen reminded councilors that their Oregon Government Ethics Commission Statements of Economic Interest are due April 15. He and Cole recently held a meeting about keeping the summer concert series going with a different organizer. Along with Reigel, he met with officials from Col-Pac, DEQ and Business Oregon about funding opportunities for a screw press at the wastewater plant and a potential extension of the sewer line down Dyke Road as part of a statewide industrial lands initiative. State Representative Darcy Edwards urged City officials to put together funding requests for the 2027 legislative session. Langner said the school district may be proposing a bond next year.

**10. City Calendar/Announcements**---Jorgensen said that the Rainier Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting was scheduled for the following Thursday. Its Spring Bazaar is scheduled for April 18 at the Senior Center and its county commissioner candidate forum is scheduled for May 6 in Clatskanie and in partnership with that City's chamber.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator