

**City of Rainier
City Council Meeting
May 4, 2026
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the council meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Council entered into executive session at 5:32 p.m. The executive session adjourned at 5:59 p.m. Cole called the council meeting back to order at 6:06 p.m.

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

Council Absent: Robert duPlessis and Jeremy Howell

City Attorney Present: No

City Staff Present: Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Elisha Shulda, Finance Director

Flag Salute

Approval of the Agenda—Councilor Scott Cooper moved to approve the agenda. That motion was seconded by Council President Mike Kreger. Councilors Cooper, Kreger, Paul Langner, Charleen Ratkie and Denis Watson all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Mayor’s Address—Cole read a proclamation into the record marking the week of May 17-23 as National Public Works Week.

Visitor Comments—Senior Center Director Jan Rich said the claim that the Senior Center is going to lose funding and close if the Rainier Economic Development Corporation (REDCO) debt is paid off is not true. The funding comes from the federal government, then goes to the Oregon Department of Human Services, then to Community Action Team (CAT), then to the Senior Center. The Senior Center has a good relationship with CAT and the City and REDCO are not involved in the operations of the Senior Center. The Center is going to remain open and will continue to work with CAT. Michael Self said that grant funding cannot be used for operations because they aren’t guaranteed. He added that moving money between funds is common practice. Maple Street resident Shawna Twitchell is hosting a graduation party and is requesting on-street parking for the occasion. Kreger moved to approve the request. That motion was seconded by Cooper. Councilors Cooper, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson all voted in favor. None were opposed. Cole read remarks into the record from Maple Street resident Susie Hancock.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the April 6, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the minutes. That motion was seconded by Langner. Councilors Cooper, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson all voted in favor. None were opposed.

New Business

- a. Columbia Business Alliance Request—Sierra Trass said that the Columbia Economic Team (CET) dissolved. Much of its work has continued through the Columbia Business Alliance

(CBA) under the City of Scappoose. The CBA is seeking contributions from the cities in the county, similar to what they were paying into the CET. Rainier's contribution was \$4,000 per year. Cole said the City now has a room that CBA can use for meetings in town. The City had asked CET for representation on its board for years and was refused.

b. Resolution 26-06-01—To Change the Boundary of the Lower Columbia Maritime Enterprise Zone—Art Fish said that the boundary change would add a single tax lot SW of Clatskanie to the Enterprise Zone. It's part of an old mill that was rezoned. The change would enable Scion Lumber to utilize the Enterprise Zone for its estimated \$35 million investment, which will create 35 jobs. Langner moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Kreger. Councilors Cooper, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson all voted in favor. None were opposed.

c. Public Hearing on Supplemental Budget Resolution—Cole opened the hearing at 6:52 p.m. Nobody offered any testimony. Cole closed the hearing at 6:53 p.m.

d. Resolution 26-06-02—Transferring Appropriations for the 2025-26 Fiscal Year—Kreger moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Cooper. Finance Director Elisha Shulda explained that a previous interfund loan from the General Fund to the Sewer Fund covered one fiscal year's worth of deficit in the Sewer Fund. However, the City adopted a two-year budget and the second year did not have an adjustment. The Sewer Fund balance is a negative \$93,000 because revenue was estimated higher than what was received. This appropriations transfer will get the City to a balanced beginning fund balance in the Sewer Fund for the upcoming fiscal year. Councilors Cooper, Kreger, Langner, Ratkie and Watson all voted in favor of the motion to pass the resolution. None were opposed.

e. Riverfront Trail Discussion—Langner said that parts of the bank around the trail are starting to fail. He's proposing adding more blocks where the blackberry bushes are and putting fabric and rock on the other side to add stability. Council agreed by consensus to direct Public Works to obtain a cost figure and possible grants.

Unfinished Business

a. Council Goals for 2026-27—Jorgensen gave an overview of the goals council has achieved over the past year. Cooper said that the sole council goal should be figuring out the sewer system finances. Council agreed by consensus.

b. Wastewater Plant MAO

Reports—Jorgensen said he attended the final CET meeting. He and Reigel met with Environmental Policy Innovation Center about grand funding for the design work on the screw press at the wastewater plant. Jorgensen arranged for the publication of budget notices, was the guest speaker at the Rainier Chamber of Commerce meeting, met with representatives of Cowlitz Clean Sweep and is now the new chair of the Columbia County Cultural Coalition.

City Calendar/Announcements—Jorgensen said that Budget Committee will be meeting May 11. Due to budget noticing requirements, the next council meeting will be June 8. The Rainier Chamber of Commerce is holding its next meeting May 14 in the new conference room in City Hall.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator