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**City of Prairie City
Council Meeting
March 11, 2026**

Attendance:

Mayor Bradford
Councilor Coburn
Councilor Clark
Councilor McClung
Councilor Davis
Councilor Bernard (via phone)
Shonalie Oakes, City Recorder
Mike Patterson, Public Works
Brian Heuckman, Public Works
Rob Gaslin, CPA
Benjamin Richardson, Museum

Visitors:

Mary Brown
Ed Clark
Frances Preston
Steve Patterson
Wanda Patterson
Larry Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 6pm, pledge recited, and roll call taken. Councilor Bernard appeared via phone.

Minutes: February 11, 2026, Council Meeting Minutes were considered. **MSP: To approve the minutes of February 11, 2026, Councilor Coburn/McClung, all present voted unanimously.**

Public Comment: None.

Parks Master Plan and Funding Timeline

Status:

Committee reportedly ready to present “first project idea”
Seeking to finalize plan with HECO before council presentation

Concerns:

Application deadline for funding likely in April; official deadline not posted due to staffing changes at agency

Risk that waiting until next regular meeting could be too late

Potential Action:

May require a special meeting if materials become available before next meeting

41 Next Step:
42 Proceed with agenda; revisit if Dennis Lynch (OPRD Committee Leader) arrives.
43 **Fourth of July Planning (250th U.S. Anniversary)**
44 Context:
45 Early planning due to significance of 250th anniversary
46 Fireworks likely not feasible given fire risk and location limitations (Oxbow access, fields,
47 seasonal timing)
48 Ideas Discussed:
49 Alternative to fireworks: drone light show (ruled out; ~ \$100k)
50 Explore private property for fireworks: potential outreach to ranchers (e.g., Voight; neighbor's
51 meadow); check timing with hay/grazing
52 Coordinate with Forest Service for training/pumps if fire risk allows
53 Consider partnering with John Day for fireworks while holding parade/events locally
54 Car Show (antique and modern; Corvette/Porsche clubs; possible separate date if July 4 too full)
55 Parade enhancements: prizes, float-building incentives, business-donated gift cards
56 Family activities: live music, water slides (booked at 30% discount), face painting, sack races,
57 three-legged races
58 Competitions/Tournaments: horseshoes, cornhole (adult and kids divisions), basketball (3-
59 on-3/1-on-1), lawnmower drag racing (liability unknown), pedal tractor pulls, log cutting
60 (historic precedent)
61 Dunk tank (with council participation suggested)
62 Bingo (noted as popular locally)
63 Marble hunt (previously well-received)
64 Food/Fundraisers: invite school groups (football, FFA) to host meals; coordinate via school
65 communications
66 Venue expansion: consider Depot Park, school fields (football/baseball) with permissions; spread
67 events to benefit local businesses and museum
68 Ask Mosier permission for the potential use of their corner lot (subject to owner permission and
69 mowing)
70 Committee Formation:
71 Need a dedicated Fourth of July Committee to avoid overburdening staff
72 Volunteers mentioned: Trevor Hampshire and Ford Tanner willing
73 Outreach plan:
74 Flyers around town and at schools (announce fundraising opportunities; sign-ups)
75 Radio advertising on KJDY as a public notice
76 Coordinate with Chamber of Commerce (use membership for free event promotion)
77 Clarify county-wide participation welcome (not limited to Prairie City)
78 Council noted: If no committee forms, council will assume responsibilities
79 Immediate Actions/Assignments:
80 Water slides booked (shorter length, same height; take less park space)

81 Book music now; pursue grant to cover music and slides
82 Develop and distribute:
83 Flyer recruiting committee members (city- and county-wide)
84 School flyer for student group fundraisers
85 **Contact:**
86 Chamber (Shonalie) for advertising support
87 KJDY for public notice ads
88 School superintendent for facilities permission
89 Sheriff for parade road closures
90 Parade announcer (Logan), National Anthem singer, American Legion cannon
91 Considerations:
92 Establish a parade theme
93 Determine tournament fee structure and prize payouts (historically top 3; last year winner-take-
94 all)
95 Space management: slides, beer garden, bands, vendors; expand footprint to Depot Park/school
96 as needed
97 **Grad Night Donation**
98 Request: Funding support for senior Grad Night
99 History: Last year funded by personal donations from council members, previous years City
100 donated \$150.
101 Motion: City to donate \$150; council/staff/public may add personal donations
102 **Vote: MSP: City to donate \$150 Councilor Coburn/Davis. Passed unanimously; Emily**
103 **abstained due to potential conflict**
104 Additional Donations pledged (from attendees during meeting):
105 Ben Richardson, Ed Clark, Brian Heckman, Mike, Mary Brown, Mayor Bradford
106 Delivery:
107 Donations to be dropped at City Hall; Emily to pick up Monday
108 Checks payable to: "PC Grad Night 2026" (or Prairie City School as needed)
109 **Depot Park Advertisement (Motorcycle Maps)**
110 Description: Annual ad in "Come Ride With Us" Motorcycle Maps (Depot Park and Museum)
111 Cost: \$1,100 (increased ~ \$200 from prior years)
112 Budget: Funds budgeted; check prepared
113 **Motion: Approve advertising purchase Councilor McClung**
114 **Second: Councilor Clark**
115 **Vote: Passed unanimously**
116 **Equipment Purchase Discussion (Public Works)**
117 Proposal: Purchase a 4WD off-road man lift (60–80 ft reach) for decorations, banners, tree lights
118 Used price range: \$12,000–\$20,000
119 New: > \$100,000
120 Renting from Baker/Eastern Oregon Rentals: ~\$3,000 per two-day period (delivery included);

121 used twice annually for tree lights up/down
122 Rationale:
123 Safer and more capable than current trailer-mounted lift (steep angles over roadway swags,
124 safety concerns)
125 Reduces dependency on borrowing equipment (liability if damages occur)
126 Multi-use potential (seasonal decorations, pole banners, other tasks)
127 Alternatives Considered:
128 Telehandler (more expensive for decent used; ~ \$30k+)
129 Small bucket truck (cheaper, but limited lifting capability)
130 Storage: Outdoors with other city equipment (no covered equipment storage currently)
131 Budget: Capital equipment funds available (< \$20k target)
132 **Decision:** Table to next meeting
133 ***Public Works to review and prioritize equipment needs overall***
134 Include whether tree lighting will continue at current height (affects need)
135 Explore assistance for current-year tree light removal
136 Note: Tree lights are high-quality, multi-colored “amusement park grade” (~\$2,500–\$3,000); do
137 not leave up year-round, in time sun will damage.
138 **Budget Process and Calendar**
139 Budget Committee:
140 Volunteers needed: 6 (equal to council size)
141 Two volunteers confirmed at meeting; one returning member noted
142 Applications to be completed by volunteers
143 First Budget Committee Meeting:
144 Proposed Date/Time: Wednesday, April 29 at 6:00 PM (subject to adjustment based on member
145 availability)
146 Gaslin to prepare draft budget for presentation and discussion
147 Notices:
148 Legal ads to run April 8 and April 15
149 Submit ad to paper by April 2
150 **Next Council Meeting (early April):**
151 Approve Budget Committee appointments
152 Subsequent Budget Meetings:
153 To be scheduled at first committee meeting; ensure adequate notice/publication
154 **Insurance Forecast (included in council books for budget information)**
155 Medical: Up to +7.5%
156 Workers’ Comp (SAIF): +5% to +20%
157 Council to review packet; bring questions/concerns to staff
158 **Public Works Report (Highlights)**
159 Backhoe at compost site: Radiator needs repaired; reinstallation pending
160 Significant time spent preparing water plant improvements grant materials

161 EPA Water Project (Water Meters):
162 In legal review; aim to go to formal bid within 1–2 weeks
163 Target award mid-April (approx. two-week bid period)
164 Plan: City staff to perform installations; consider contractor only if deadlines require
165 Ongoing monthly operations as listed in written report (copies available)
166 **Fire Department Report**
167 Conditions:
168 Early fire activity: Three grass fires already this year; fuels dry quickly during warm periods
169 Staffing:
170 New firefighter: Dustin Phipps completed Basic Firefighter Academy (fully certified)
171 State Actions:
172 Chief Rynearson appointed to Forest Land Reclassification Committee (Central Oregon Fire
173 Protection District)
174 State eliminated Class 1 Fire Patrol Tax; remaining:
175 Level 2: \$2.89/acre
176 Level 3: \$3.19/acre (figures stated in meeting)
177 Process to reclassify Grant County lands begins next week; estimated 2+ years to complete
178 Potential impacts:
179 Increased taxes on grazing/foothill lands if reclassified as timberland (broad vegetation-based
180 definition)
181 Possible overlay could affect Prairie City Rural Fire District finances (already constrained under
182 Measure 5/50 caps)
183 City limits not directly impacted; rural areas likely affected
184 Timeline for any tax changes: Likely appearing on tax rolls Fall 2028 or 2029
185 Goal:
186 Develop sensible local maps/lines for timberland vs. grazing vs. non-productive lands
187 Engage with local stakeholders; keep community informed
188 **Accounts Payable and Financial Report**
189 Cash Balance (month end): \$1.91M (prior month \$1.96M), held in LGIP and checking
190 Water Fund:
191 Income up \$29,000 through Feb (8 months); on pace +\$44,000 YOY
192 Target increase range: \$35,000–\$50,000; tracking mid-range
193 Current YTD fund balance shows a \$28,000 decrease (operating loss)
194 Interest: ~ \$50,000 earned YTD in LGIP
195 Appropriations Review:
196 General Fund Personnel Services: Tight but expected to finish within budget
197 Water Fund Materials & Services: Over budget due to late-billed prior-year engineering costs
198 (~\$27,000 performed March last year)
199 Landfill: Slightly over budget (\$61) due to prior-year work billed current year
200 Road Fund Materials & Services: Close but expected to be fine

201 Corrections/Next Steps:
202 Implemented improved billing/processing with Sisul
203 Plan intra-fund budget adjustments via resolutions next meeting:
204 Landfill: Use contingency (\$10,000 available)
205 Water: Shift from Capital Outlay within 10% limit; no supplemental budget anticipated
206 Required public notice for budget adjustments will be published
207 Notable AP Items:
208 CMGEO: Advertising (clerk position; radio rates higher for non-public notices)
209 Ed Staub & Sons: Fuel and stove oil (includes museum/park heating where applicable)
210 Visa: Department cards used for software subscriptions, office supplies, parts, etc.
211 Per diem reimbursements for training travel (separate from Visa charges)
212 **Motion: To pay the bills. Councilor Clark**
213 **Second: Councilor McClung**
214 **Vote: Passed unanimously**
215 **Council Training Opportunity:** LOC Spring Conference: April 23–24, Pendleton
216 Encouraged for council training; potential grants available (covers registration/lodging)
217 Early registration recommended for discounts/scholarships
218 *Action:* Council to inform staff by end of week if interested
219 **Next Steps and Action Items**
220 • Parks Master Plan:
221 Monitor timeline with HECO; schedule special meeting if needed before application
222 deadlines
223 • Fourth of July:
224 Form committee via flyers, KJDY ads, Chamber promotion, school outreach
225 Book music; pursue grant for music and slides
226 Prepare school fundraiser flyer; contact superintendent re: facilities
227 Coordinate parade logistics (roads, announcer, anthem, cannon)
228 • Grad Night:
229 City to issue \$150
230 Collect individual donations at City Hall; checks to “PC Grad Night 2026”
231 • Depot Park Ad:
232 Proceed with \$1,100 Motorcycle Maps ad
233 • Equipment Purchase:
234 Public Works to prioritize equipment needs and report next meeting
235 Explore options for removing current tree lights safely this year
236 • Budget:
237 Advertise Budget Committee on 4/8 and 4/15; submit by 4/2
238 Appoint committee at next council meeting
239 Hold first Budget Committee meeting on April 29 at 6:00 PM (tentative)
240 Prepare resolutions for intra-fund budget adjustments (water, landfill)

241 **Adjournment**

242 **Motion to adjourn: Councilor McClung**

243 **Second: Councilor Clark**

244 **Vote: Passed unanimously**

245 **Adjourned**

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248 Approved by the City Council on this 8th day of April 2026 and signed by the Mayor.

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253 Mayor Bradford

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257 Attested

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262 Shonalie Oakes, City Recorder

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