

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 in the Council Chambers, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, Oregon and in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

PRESENT: Mayor, Kenneth Wells; Council President, Karen Leach; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Sidney Washburne, Andrea Ceniga, Ken Jamieson; and Ken Hancock; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Mark Wolf; Police Chief, Mark Waddell; Public Works Director, Gary Kaping; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Wells opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and took roll call.

2. Changes to the Agenda. None.

3. Approval of Minutes – August 12 and 26, 2025

MOTION: Councilor Leach made a motion to approve the August 12 and 26, 2025 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas and passed by unanimous vote of the Council: Thomas, Washburne, Ceniga, Leach, Jamieson, and Hancock.

4. Public Comment on Items not Listed on the Agenda

A. Follow-up from Staff on Previous Comments. None.

B. New Comments from Public.

Matt Raminiak, 1026 Barstow, Eugene, Oregon, stated that he had been a festival vendor for 28 years. He expressed safety concerns with the condition of Greenwood Street. He understood, after talking with the Public Works Director, that the Council would soon be presented with a proposal for a water project in that area. Mr. Raminiak said that it made logical sense to not fix a road, to only have to tear it up again for a project. He continued that the problem was that the festival brought 100,000 people to town and more and more people were coming with wheelchairs and walking assisted devices. He shared two incidents that occurred outside of his festival booth this year and noted that the street was a hazard for everyone walking or trying to traverse that street during the festival and throughout the year. He asked that Council take into consideration the condition of Greenwood when talking about the water project. He added that the Public Works Director had said that if the Council did not approve the water project, then fixing Greenwood would come to a higher place on their priority list. He invited the Council to walk Greenwood Street with him, so he could demonstrate what navigating the hazards with a wheelchair, transit chair, and walking assisted devices looked like.

Mayor Wells thanked Mr. Raminiak for his comments and invitation and noted that the Council had a full agenda tonight so would not be able to leave the meeting to look at the street that evening.

5. Flock Camera Presentation

Chief Waddell distributed an article on Eugene Police using the Automated License Plate Reader (LPR) system and information on a camera system offered by Axon.

Lily Ho from Flock Safety, gave a power point presentation on Flock's Automated License Plate Recognition cameras. Flock technology was used in over 5,000 communities across the country, to assist law enforcement in solving crimes and finding missing people. The cameras would be mounted 12 to 14 feet above ground and would only capture the back of the vehicle's license plate as well as color, make, and model of the vehicle. There would be no facial recognition or use with traffic enforcement. Any information taken on these cameras would be owned by the City of Junction City, and the Junction City Police Department (JCPD) could choose who they wanted to share the photos with and how long they wanted to retain photos. Information captured was automatically deleted at 30 days, but JCPD could choose a longer retention of 60 days, 90 days, or longer. Included with the software was a Transparency Portal, which was a public page the community could see very clearly who JCPD shared their data with and what policies JCPD had on this. There were over 20 law enforcement agencies in Oregon that were using Flock technology, and she reviewed a few case studies in Washington and Oregon where the technology was used to solve crimes. Flock partnered with Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the national organization that runs Amber Alerts for missing children. Flock had helped solve hundreds of missing seniors and over a hundred missing children cases.

Chief Waddell shared that the cities of Springfield and Eugene used Flock, and Lane County had just ordered 20 cameras. Flock had offered JCPD a 60-day trial, but a contract would have to first be signed. Attorney Connelly was working with Flock on the contract language so the City would not have to continue with them, after the 60-day trial. Oregon Community Credit Union in Junction City currently had one Flock camera.

Councilor Jamieson asked what the turn around was on getting the data to JCPD, after the initial picture. Lily responded that the pictures were just taken, and nothing would come up unless JCPD or some other jurisdiction that JCPD was sharing their information with was looking for a specific vehicle on their hot list. From the time a request was put in for a specific vehicle, the information would be able to be retrieved in seconds, if that vehicle had been captured on one of the cameras.

Chief Waddell shared a real world application, where JCPD had heard that 20 or 30 Mongols were headed to Junction City during the Function 4 Junction. JCPD contacted the Eugene PD to see if they could find them on their cameras, and Eugene PD confirmed that they were heading towards Junction City. The group either passed through or around Junction City. For the Flock technology, you had to be looking for something specifically, and it would tell you if the car was seen, location and time. He referred to a recent case that involved a missing woman who was eventually found deceased, but if they had had the technology, they would have been able to figure out when she left town in her car and if she had come back or not.

Chief Waddell continued that JCPD currently had LPR in their vehicles through Axon. He provided an example of someone who had stolen and then dropped a money clip with \$200 in the McDonald's parking lot. With the McDonald's video and JCPD's LPR cameras, they were able to find the suspect and get the money back to the owner. This was an example of a crime that was solved quickly by using technology for a crime that might not have otherwise been solved.

Councilor Hancock asked if there would be additional costs for saving the data for longer than 30 days. Lily responded that she would get back to the City on that.

Chief Waddell noted that when they started this process, they believed Flock was the sole technology, but they just learned that Axon was a competitor and used a different technology to capture LPR that was in its pilot program and would be ready at the first of the year. Axon had offered to come to the next Council meeting to make a presentation. JCPD was already using Axon, and the LPR technology would integrate with JCPD's in car video and body worn cameras. Oregon State Police used Axon cameras in their vehicles, as well as other law enforcement agencies north of Junction City. JCPD was applying for grants for both LPR technologies. Chief Waddell recommended that Axon make their presentation to Council, before making a decision.

Councilor Hancock asked if the agencies that had Flock would be able to query their systems for a specific license plate number, if there was a missing person case today and report back to JCPD. Chief Waddell responded yes, there would still be cooperation between agencies.

The Council consensus was to have Axon make their presentation at the next Council meeting.

6. City Prosecutor Appointment

Mayor Wells asked if the Council would like to make a motion to appoint a City Prosecutor.

MOTION: Councilor Thomas made a motion to appoint Leahy and Cox to provide City Prosecutor services to the City of Junction City. The motion was seconded by Councilor Leach and passed by unanimous vote of the Council: Thomas, Washburne, Ceniga, Leach, Jamieson, and Hancock.

7. City Attorney Contract Review

Attorney Wolf took a seat in the audience.

Administrator Knope presented the draft City Attorney contract, for Council review and feedback. Council had no comments to add. Administrator Knope stated that he would bring the contract back to the next regular meeting for Council approval.

Attorney Wolf returned to the attorney table.

8. Policy on Mayor/Councilors Contacting City Attorney

Administrator Knope stated that it had been brought up at a Council meeting to create a policy to allow Councilors to reach out to the City Attorney's office directly. He thought it would be simpler to add a couple of sentences to the Council rules, than to create a standalone policy and he presented the draft below (Additions in bold and underlined):

"10.3 During a City Council meeting, all requests for information go directly to the Chair or the City Administrator. At other times, if the request for information would entail an effort that would require time to be spent researching and/or preparing a response, the request goes directly to the City Administrator. The City Administrator will direct the request to staff, the City Attorney, or respond to the request themselves. **Additionally, the Mayor and individual councilors may reach out directly to the City Attorney with questions. The Mayor and individual councilors are encouraged to keep the questions as brief as possible to keep the fees as minimal as possible.** Question or complaints regarding staff go directly to the City Administrator. Questions or complaints regarding the City Administrator go to the Mayor."

Councilor Ceniga asked how much the City would be charged if a Councilor had a question that would take less than five minutes. Attorney Wolf responded that the charge was 1/10 for every six minutes, so that would be a .1 rate of their hourly billing. Administrator Knope added that if the hourly billing was \$250, a .1 rate would be a \$25 charge.

Councilor Thomas asked how much was paid for attorney driving time to a meeting. Attorney Wolf responded it was ½ the hourly rate for driving time. Administrator Knope added there was no travel time charge when the attorney attended the meetings virtually. He added that was why the attorneys were often attending virtually, to save the City money, but they attended in person for items where it would be a benefit for them to be in person.

Councilor Hancock noted that the last sentence in 10.3 read, "Questions and complaints regarding the City Administrator go to the Mayor", and he thought that at some point they should review that language, because the Council did the hiring and firing of the City Administrator and should not be left out of the loop on knowing about a complaint on the City Administrator. Administrator Knope responded that 10.3 meant that if a Council member had a complaint about the City Administrator, they would take it to the Mayor. He added that if someone in the audience had a complaint against him, there would be a separate process for that that did not circumvent the Council. Councilor Hancock suggested that they talk about this at a Council Work Session, as he was unclear about the mechanics.

Mayor Wells stated that if anybody had a complaint against the City Administrator, Mayor Wells would contact the City Attorney, and the City Attorney would probably cover that with the Council at the next meeting in Executive Session. He asked for clarification from Attorney Wolf that it would not be the Mayor's place to tell the Council but would be the City's attorneys. Attorney Wolf responded it would be the Mayor contacting the City Attorney and there would usually be discussion on getting to the full Council. Councilor Hancock added they could discuss the communication on how they were going to do this.

Councilor Ceniga asked if all complaints should come to the Council that were against the City Administrator, no matter who voiced them, whether employee, Councilor, citizen, etc., and then the Council would decide if they wanted to look into it further. Attorney Wolf responded that there may be some times where the complaint was meritless.

Councilor Ceniga asked who would decide if a complaint was meritless. She provided an example where a complaint from another City about the City Administrator went to that City Administrator who laughed it off. She added that the Council were the bosses of the City Administrator, and they should be the ones who decided if there was merit to a complaint or not and whether it should be investigated. Attorney Wolf responded that even if the Council created a policy tonight that every complaint should go to the Council, and the City Administrator fielded complaints like the Administrator in Councilor Ceniga's example, the policy would not solve that problem. A complaint like Administrator Knope was rude to me when he said he would not authorize a lavish party that someone wanted, might not be a complaint that would rise to the level of calling an executive session so that Attorney Connelly could report that somebody said Administrator Knope was rude when he said no to a ridiculous request.

Councilor Ceniga stated that it would also be letting the City's employees know that the Council was listening to them, and she did not want any employee in the City to feel that they

were not being heard. Attorney Wolf responded that he was thinking of a citizen voicing a complaint and not an employee.

Administrator Knope stated that he had no issues with the concern that Councilor Ceniga expressed and that was not the policy before Council tonight. He continued that he would be more than happy to bring to a work session what the City had in place to address personnel complaints. Today, if someone had a personnel complaint, they submitted a specific form to the City Recorder for police employee complaints and a separate form for all other employee complaints, and that was provided to the supervisor of the employee. If the complaint was against the City Administrator, that went to the Mayor who would share with the City Attorney. He added that there was a lot of room for improvement on the process, and he would be happy to bring that back to Council for discussion.

Councilor Hancock noted that this was definitely a work session item and asked if they could have Attorney Wolf attend that meeting, since it was personnel related. Administrator Knope responded certainly.

Administrator Knope stated that it would be great for the Council to put into writing their expectations of how the City Attorney's office was supposed to handle when they were notified of a City Administrator complaint from the Mayor.

Mayor Wells asked what other cities did and if they allowed their Councilors to call the City Attorney. Attorney Wolf responded that he and Attorney Connelly did not think they represented any other cities that allowed contact outside of a council meeting, aside from some narrow exceptions, like if there was a procedural question about how to place something on a council agenda or similar process questions, in which the Councilor could email the City Attorney, copying the City Administrator. For all other entities, the Mayor or City Administrator authorized a Councilor to contact the City Attorney, mainly because the timer would start and depending on the question, it might be five minutes or 1 ½ hours. They thought that staff could answer Councilor questions 9 times out of 10 as well or better than legal staff, and many times someone would think that something was a legal question, but it was not and staff had rules, processes, and information on hand, more so than outside legal counsel.

Councilor Hancock stated that his concern was how does the Council communicate with the City Attorney regarding personnel issues as they affect anyone that was on contract that the Council supervised. As it was written now, the Council did not have contact with the legal office, and he did not want to feel like he could not call the City Attorney if he had an issue that was personnel related. What he was talking about was process, and he did not want to be cut off from the City Attorney's office if he had a question related to a personnel issue over any one of the people they supervised. He felt the Council should have the ability to call the City Attorney, as that was good practice.

Attorney Wolf noted that the Council would have the authority to contact the City Attorney's office if the Mayor were to say yes. Councilor Hancock responded that Junction City was a weak Mayor/strong Council form of government, in which the Council was the supervisor of several people. His concern, if there was an issue related to one of those people, was that a Councilor should have the right to pick up the phone and talk to the City Attorney. He added that they could not manage based on who was in office today, as the current Mayor would allow a Councilor to talk to the attorney, but what if a future Mayor said no.

Administrator Knope responded that now that he had heard more, he understood what Councilor Hancock was saying, which was very specific and made sense to him. He thought what would be a better way to approach this would be creating a new section in the Council rules that specifically outlined how the Council wanted things like this to work. He added that this would make more sense instead of a general you could call if you feel like it. For folks that the Council supervised, it made logical sense, as that was a very specific case, and was limited. He added that the City had nothing in place that would address that.

Administrator Knope continued that at a work session, he could bring back his best attempt to add a new section within the Council rules to take care of this. It could expand into some other things, if the Council wanted to and lay out how it supervised its employees.

The Council consensus was for Administrator Knope to proceed, as he had suggested.

9. Revolving Loan Fund Committee Appointment

Administrator Knope reviewed that the City received one application for the two financial industry professional position vacancies on the Revolving Loan Fund Committee.

Mayor Wells appointed Craig Carpenter to fill one of the financial industry profession positions.

MOTION: Councilor Leach made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment to the Revolving Loan Fund Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jamieson and passed by unanimous vote of the Council: Thomas, Washburne, Ceniga, Leach, Jamieson, and Hancock.

10. Council Regular Meeting Date in November

Administrator Knope noted that the standing regular Council meeting on November 11th would fall on Veteran's Day. He asked how the Council would like to proceed.

The Council consensus was to hold the standing November Council meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

11. Council Agenda Forecaster

Administrator Knope presented the forecaster and noted that the September Work Session would have one item only of SCS Engineering presenting the water and sewer impacts. He added that the Axon camera presentation would be scheduled for the October 14th Council meeting, as well as the Fire Lock Boxes. He had asked the City Attorney's office to prepare a waiver, as they represented both the City and the Junction City Rural Fire Protection District.

12. Staff Reports

Chief Waddell reported: Finalizing interviews for the Police Services Technician and would provide a written exam to 14 Police Officer candidates on Wednesday; MDTs arrived on Monday; the CAD system with the county was still not live; Records Management System was on schedule for October; Thursday, September 11th would be the First Responders Picnic at Laurel Ballfields; and School Resource Officer Janet Deckard would be the police representative at next week's Community Meetings.

Director Kaping reported: The Industrial Slug Loading report was submitted to DEQ, so the City now had an additional 20 Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDUs); Public Works was doing a lot of maintenance, getting ready for fall and winter; and the pool would close on September 14th.

Administrator Knope reported: Fischer Consulting was helping to get the word out on the Community Meetings that would be held next week; he had been putting together new furniture at the Community Center, and the Community Meetings next week would provide a great opportunity for citizens to see the remodeled Community Center; and he was working with the county on the LRIG radio system.

13. Previous Month's Expenditures. None.**14. Councilor Comments/Questions**

Councilor Thomas expressed concerns that it had fallen back on the Council for the reason that Greenwood Street was not being fixed. Director Kaping responded that was not the indication that he had given Mr. Raminiak, and Director Kaping had shared that the Council would be talking about some projects that included a project on that street, so there was no reason to spend money on it now and tear up the street later. Director Kaping added that if the Council decided not to go through with the water project, then that road would rise a little further towards the top of his list. Councilor Thomas expressed appreciation for the clarification and noted that everybody was doing a good job.

Councilor Washburne shared that a citizen had reported that there was a hole in the fence at the pickleball court. Public Works Foreman Johnson responded that he was aware of that and would be repairing.

Councilor Ceniga asked if there was a date for the water project, in reference to Mr. Raminiak's comments. Director Kaping responded that there was not, and it would be part of a big project package that would come before Council.

Councilor Ceniga asked what would happen if the water project was not awarded. Director Kaping responded that they would have to readdress Greenwood Street along with the other bad streets and see how close it came to the top. He added that there were other streets in

worse condition. Councilor Ceniga said that there might be streets in worse condition, but they may not have big events on them. Director Kaping responded that he was sure that would play into the decision on whether to do that street or not. Councilor Ceniga added that if they were going to hold big events, they probably needed to figure out what they were going to do or somehow try to prioritize because it was a safety issue.

Councilor Leach thanked Chief Waddell and Director Kaping for their work and said it was great to see officers on the streets. She continued that the traffic really slowed down on 6th Street, when an officer was parked in that area. She expressed appreciation to Foreman Johnson, Administrator Knope, and Recorder Vodrup.

Councilor Jamieson shared that he did water exercises at the pool, and the pool looked nice and clean, and the City did a great job on it. He thanked Chief Waddell and Director Kaping for all their work. He shared with Mr. Raminiak that he would be willing to walk Greenwood Street with him and look at the areas of concern. Councilor Jamieson continued that he had lived in Junction City for 56 years, and they had some streets that needed work. He added that the City had a long list of things that needed to be done in a timely manner.

Councilor Hancock stated that he too was concerned with what Mr. Raminiak was saying. He hoped the City would be an active partner in the preparation for the festival and take that seriously, walk the areas, and examine them. He said that a few years ago, there were orange vests all over the place trying to help before the festival, and he did not see that kind of turnout this year. Director Kaping responded that two people had been assigned to work on preparation for the festival. Councilor Hancock asked if they still did cold patching if a pothole was dangerous. Director Kaping responded that they did, but the problem with cold patching was if the hole was not at least an inch in depth, the material would get kicked out and become a tripping hazard. They could look at the holes and see if hot mix might have a better chance.

Councilor Hancock continued that the City addressing this would demonstrate that they care and that was what he was looking for. He expressed thanks to everybody. He specifically thanked Attorney Wolf for his attendance at the meeting and that he would come back to a future work session to share his expertise as they work to identify processes so when they left office that process would still be there.

15. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Wells thanked Administrator Knope for including photos in his weekly email and encouraged him to continue including those. He appreciated the good discussions that they had tonight. They had some different ideas, but they got things straightened out. Chief Waddell brought up some new ideas, and they would hold off on Flock. He appreciated everyone's work tonight, as they had accomplished a lot. The Community Meetings would be held next week; a lot of work had gone into preparing for them from staff's point of view and they would all see how it worked.

Councilor Leach asked if the Council members were to let Administrator Knope know if they were going to attend. Administrator Knope responded that his understanding from previous discussions was that everyone going would be in listening mode and not talking. Attorney Wolf added that sitting together could appear that Council members were talking, and by sitting on each corner of the room, there would be no question.

16. Executive Session per ORS 192.660(2)(f) to Consider Information or Records that are exempt by law from Public Inspection and per ORS 192.660(2)(i) to Review and Evaluated the Job Performance of the City Administrator.

Mayor Wells announced Executive Session at 8:09 p.m. The session ending at 9:22 p.m.

17. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Kenneth Wells, Mayor