



NORTH BONNEVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor JB Tennison
Councilmember Emily Sabo
Councilmember Margie Lee

Councilmember Mary Helms
Councilmember #4 VACANT
Councilmember #5 VACANT

City Council Meeting Minutes March 24th, 2026 7:00 p.m.

A. Meeting Call to Order 7:00

This meeting will be held both in-person and using a video conferencing system. Click the following link to join the meeting online:

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Meeting ID: 253 570 667 557 24

Passcode: Hy6Ht3Ra

B. Roll Call

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Agenda Changes & Additions: None

E. Consent Agenda:

E.1 - Approval of the minutes of the March 10th Council meeting and March second half vouchers.

Councilor Lee asked if Jammie's Environmental was biosolids removal to which Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Taylor Chambers responded yes. Councilor Lee stated that she asked because she wanted to ensure that it was not the bill for the PUD project that the Council approved at the previous meeting.

On Motion by Councilor Lee, seconded by Councilor Helms, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote, it was ordered that the February 24th meeting minutes and March second half vouchers in the amount of \$20,686.33 be approved.

F. Opening Public Comment:

This is the time to comment on any matter falling within the purview of the North Bonneville City Council. There will also be time in conjunction with each action item for public comment relating to that item but you may only speak once per topic. Please note, the City Council cannot take action on any item which does not appear on the agenda. RCW 42.17A.555 prohibits public officials and employees from using or authorizing the use of city facilities for the purpose of supporting or opposing any campaign or ballot proposition. The City therefore respectfully reiterates that public commenters are not authorized to make reference to such matters.

F.1 - Written public comment received from Mitch Patton on March 8, 2026. Subject line: Mitch Pattons Termination from the Bradford Island Restoration Advisory Board due to communication with SCSO.

Mr. Jeff Blakeley wondered why the Council approved the minutes and vouchers in one vote instead of separating the two items out. He did not think the Council should vote on two items at one time.

City Attorney Dan Curtis explained that the Council voted on those items at the same time because they were on the Consent Agenda. When there were routine items that were not expected to have any discussion, they would be placed on the Consent Agenda. In larger cities it was not uncommon to see half a dozen or more items on Consent. If Council did decide to discuss an item, they could pull it off Consent and have it listed as a regular agenda item that way everything else on Consent could be approved with one vote, and the item that was pulled would receive a separate discussion and vote.

Councilor Sabo declared that both the school board and the County Commissioners utilized consent blocks on their agendas.

Mr. Blakeley asked who was responsible for taking minutes to which CAO Chambers responded that she was. He expressed gratitude for the comprehensive nature of CAO Chambers' minutes.

CAO Chambers announced that there were no online attendees who wished to comment.

G. Councilmember Comments:

Councilor Helms stated that she did not have any announcements to make.

Councilor Lee thanked the public for attending the meeting. She noted that there were some people present who applied to fill the vacant Council seats, which she appreciated.

Councilor Sabo seconded Councilor Lee's comment and expressed excitement for the number of applicants to fill the vacant Council seats.

H. Sheriff's Report:

Mayor Tennison announced that Skamania County Sheriff Summer Scheyer was not in attendance as she had other obligations.

I. Mayor's Report:

Mayor Tennison announced that the City was in the process of hiring a temporary summer worker and a full time maintenance worker. He thought the interviews went well and looked forward to filling those positions.

J. City Clerk Report:

CAO Chambers announced that most of her focus had been on staffing and HR related issues. She stated that she attended a Skamania County Chamber of Commerce happy hour

event with Fire Chief Kalista Hamilton and thought it was a great networking opportunity where she had the chance to meet some of the business owners in the community. She noted that she got business cards from a staffing agency that she thought could be a helpful partner for the City. She stated that the previous day, she and Mayor Tennison met with Sarah Kellie and Arnold Bell from the Skamania County Building Department to discuss updates to the City's interlocal agreement for building permitting and inspection services. She stated that the County sent her their proposed revisions which she sent to the City Attorney who had some corrections. She announced that once the agreement was ready, she would bring it before Council for approval.

K. City Attorney's Report:

City Attorney Dan Curtis stated that a lot of what he did was behind the scenes so there was often not much to report for public disclosure. He stated that he had been working closely with CAO Chambers to shore up some procedures and declared they were working diligently to ensure that things did not get missed or fall through the cracks.

L. Planner's Report:

Planning Assistant Carol Korst presented on behalf of City Planner Richard Hall. She announced that the Planning Commission held a special meeting on March 12, 2026, which included a public hearing to discuss the Critical Areas Ordinance Draft Amendment. She stated that Jackson Civil Engineering was present to discuss the nature of the changes and additions. There were no comments from the public, so the hearing was closed and put before the Commission for consideration. After some discussion, the Commission voted and approved the measure. She noted that the next step in the process was the SEPA notification which was placed for publication in the Skamania County Pioneer. She said that Mr. Harold Cook and City Planner Hall participated in a virtual meeting the previous week with the Energy Facilities Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) to discuss the proposed Cascade Renewable Transmission Project.

M. Fire Chief report:

Chief Hamilton stated that the Department had several issues, some of which she had already spoken with Council about. She noted that she continued to discover unpaid bills from the past several years which had to come out of the current budget. She declared that since she took her position in December of 2025, every Department vehicle had failed at some point, noting that Brush 8-3 was currently out of service as it went into limp mode while firefighters were traveling to Stevenson for training the night before. She stated there was an unpaid bill from the previous year for work on Brush 8-3, so she assumed there would not be a warranty on whatever broke this time. She said that the Department did not have the money to fix these kinds of things. She remarked that she sent some of the team to training and had to patch their gear together. She spoke about a call she responded to the week before at the Hamilton Park Apartments where a resident's daughter had to call the Department because the fire alarm had been going off the entire time she was there. Chief Hamilton remarked that the alarm system did not alert the Department, and when firefighters did respond, they could not access the building because there were no members of staff present to let them in. She stated there were a lot of vulnerable people in the community and expressed concern about

issues like this. She remarked that the Department had similar issues with the hot springs. She asked for the community's assistance with fundraising ideas. She noted that hydrant flow testing was scheduled and that the firefighter's bottles and packs needed to be serviced and pressure tested. She said that the Department applied for a \$20,000 grant from the Department of Natural Resources. She stated that she was working with the Cowlitz County Fire Chief who had some surplus gear they planned to give to the North Bonneville Fire Department.

Mr. Jeff Blakeley asked if the alarm system issue at the Hamilton Park Apartments was a breakdown of the City's system or the apartment's to which Chief Hamilton responded it was the apartment's system that failed. Mr. Blakeley asked if the City could force the apartment to fix the issue. Chief Hamilton replied that she was in contact with the new owner but there was no on-site management. She declared that she was working to get something put in place for better access to the building, but it was not free. She stated there were a couple of different companies that the City could order fire key boxes which would give the Fire Department access to the building in an emergency. She noted that such devices were an expense to both the Fire Department and the company.

Councilor Sabo commended Chief Hamilton on her work to heal damaged relationships between the North Bonneville Fire Department and the other fire departments in the area. She mentioned that the Department recently responded to a semi-truck fire along with four other districts and opined that all the departments worked well together.

Ms. Mary Salka asked if there was a Fireman's Association for fundraising to which Chief Hamilton responded that there was a lapse in the non-profit, but Ms. Julia Blakeley was working to get the Department's non-profit status and tax ID back in order.

Ms. Salka recalled a time when the Fire Department held regular fundraisers. Councilor Sabo responded that the Auxiliary was gone and the Association had taken over the responsibilities, however, the Association only had about ten firefighters, so there was a strong need for volunteers.

Mayor Tennison recalled that fundraising for the Fire Department was tough when he served as the Fire Chief.

Chief Hamilton mentioned that her fuel budget for the whole year was only \$2,000 despite having four fire apparatuses and needing to train new members to drive the equipment. She noted that she was working with the other Fire Chiefs in the area to put together minimum training standards in Skamania County. She expressed a need for a duty rig and asked the community to be on the lookout for a reliable SUV.

Councilor Helms asked if there was a reason the City could not give the Fire Department more money.

Councilor Lee thought there should be some PDA or COVID money left. CAO Chambers remarked that the COVID money was spent and would have to investigate if there was any PDA money left. She noted that the budget was incredibly slim as there were essential projects for the City that had been put off for years. She explained that there were several issues coming to a head for multiple departments at the same time.

Chief Hamilton declared that she was not asking for more money from the City and remarked that the little money she received as a stipend for serving as the Fire Chief went straight back into the Department. She noted that she and CAO Chambers were working together to address budget issues. She declared that she had a goal to re-outfit every firefighter and shared an idea to establish an "adopt a firefighter" program where people could donate money towards purchasing new equipment for firefighters.

Mr. Forest Hofer asked what it would cost to fully outfit a firefighter. Chief Hamilton responded for a low-end set of turnouts, the pants and a coat were \$5,000, helmets were \$400, boots were \$250, and gloves were \$100. She explained that neighboring departments had some tools the Fire Department could access and they were making plans to pool resources. She knew things would get better; there was just a lot to do to get there.

Ms. Carol Korst asked if the City could consider redirecting any money received from the disk golf donations to the Fire Department, noting that it currently went towards landscaping outside City Hall.

Mayor Tennison asked Chief Hamilton for a list of the top things the Department needed. Chief Hamilton asserted that she would have been able to purchase necessary equipment had there not been so many overdue invoices to pay. She noted that the volunteer firefighter's retirement fund had not been paid into in four years which she had Fire Secretary Sabo working diligently to correct.

Ms. Julia Blakeley stated less than 50 percent of the firefighters were nearing retirement age. Most of the Department was comprised of young people trying to learn. She noted that the technology for new gear was considerably lighter than the gear utilized by the North Bonneville Fire Department. She explained that firefighters should be able to share their air packs with another firefighter from a neighboring department, but North Bonneville could not because none of the current packs had reciprocity.

Mayor Tennison declared that things like this happened when there was bad management.

Ms. Blakeley stated that she was attending a firefighting I class on the weekends and everyone else in the class had much nicer equipment. Chief Hamilton remarked that the Department did not have the budget to replace all the equipment right now, but that did not mean it couldn't be budgeted for in the future.

Councilor Sabo stated it was important to have a leader who understood budgets and the extensive planning required to complete one.

N. New Business:

N.1 - Election of Mayor Pro Tempore

Councilor Helms thought Councilor Lee should serve as Mayor Pro Tempore to which Councilor Lee responded no.

Councilor Sabo asked what happened if no one was willing to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore. Mayor Tennison stated that the Council could wait until there were more council members. Attorney Curtis stated that the Council could table the item or postpone it to a date certain.

On Motion by Councilor Lee, seconded by Councilor Helms, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote, it was ordered that Item N.1 be tabled.

Councilor Sabo asked who the Mayor Pro Tempore role fell to if Mayor Tennison was out of town to which CAO Chambers responded that the responsibility would fall to her.

Councilor Sabo asked CAO Chambers if she was comfortable with that responsibility to which she responded yes.

N.2 – Presentation of applicants for vacant Council seats.

CAO Chambers stated this item was not up for discussion or vote, it was just to present the applicants for the vacant seats to the Council. She stated that the four applicants were Mr. Forest Hofer, Mr. Jeff Blakeley, Mr. Charles Pace, and Mr. Ted Salka.

O. Closing Public Comment:

Mr. Ted Salka stated that he owned Bonneville Rock Quarry and noted that the blackberry vines between the Bonneville Hot Springs and his gate were growing out into the road. He asked the City to send an employee out to cut them back.

P. Closing Council Comments:

Councilor Sabo expressed gratitude that people were interested in filling the vacant Council seats. She declared that Chief Hamilton and the City staff were doing great work. She thought the City was in great hands and was in a much better spot than it had been in the past.

Councilor Lee thanked the public for attending and thanked the applicants for volunteering to serve on the Council. She declared it was not an easy job.

Councilor Helms echoed Councilor Lee's comments. She agreed that Chief Hamilton was doing an amazing job and stated she would do whatever she could to help the Fire Department.

Q. Executive Session:

The Council recessed into a 15-minute executive session from 7:47 pm to 8:02 pm.
The Council extended the executive session from 8:02 pm to 8:12 pm.

R. Adjournment: 8:12 pm

Note: During any public meeting, the Council may adjourn to an executive session in accordance with RCW 42.30.110.