

STATE OF IDAHO)
COUNTY OF BONNER)
CITY OF PRIEST RIVER)

MINUTES OF THE PRIEST RIVER CITY COUNCIL – 05/18/26

REGULAR MEETING

OPENING – Mayor Connolly called to order the regular meeting of the City Council at 5:30 pm on Monday, May 18, 2026, at the Priest River City Hall Council Chambers, 552 High Street, Priest River, Idaho.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Council President Turner, Council Member Mullaley, Council Member Brower, and Council Member Wagner. Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mayor Connolly, City Clerk/Treasurer Thomas, City Attorney Elsaesser, Chief of Police McLain, Director of Public Works Sifford, and City Administrator Gabell.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. TO CONSIDER AND TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING PLANNING AND ZONING APPLICATION:

FILE 26-003 – ZC HUMPHREY

THE APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A ZONE CHANGE FROM MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL TO COMMERCIAL. THE PROPERTY IS APPROXIMATELY 0.5 ACRES AND IS GENERALLY LOCATED AT 897 STATE HIGHWAY 57, PRIEST RIVER ID.

ORDINANCE 643

Mayor Connolly opened the public hearing at 5:31 pm. City Administrator Gabell explained the reason for the public hearing and the applicant’s request for a change of zoning from Multi-Use Commercial to Commercial. He gave a project summary and the background of the request, listed the applicable city codes used for staff review, reviewed agency comments, reviewed the Comprehensive Plan analysis, and staff recommendations.

Testimony from the Applicant:

Rick and Valeri Humphrey, the applicants, were not present for the hearing.

Questions from the Council:

Council Member Brower asked if the existing business would remain in the existing building, and the proposed auto sales business would be located behind it.

Council Member Mullaley asked if more than one business could be located on a parcel and asked about access from Highway 57.

Written Testimony:

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality had no comment.

Bonner County Historical Society & Museum had no comment.

Idaho Transportation Department had no objection but had comments regarding no ITD right-of-way parking and access regulations.

Idaho Department of Water Resources had no comment.

Panhandle Health District had no comment.

Priest River Public Works Department had no comment.

Brien Lanphear, 85 Fir Street, commented “No Commercial Use.”

Judy Hansen, 967 Highway 57, had no comment.

Michel Pettit, 924 Highway 57, had no comment.

Susan White-Yeaw, 107 Tamarack Street, had no comment.

Testimony from Those Supporting:

None

Testimony from Those Uncommitted:

Ann Wilder, 349 Primrose Lane, had concerns regarding an auto sales business being a potential eyesore.

Testimony from Those Opposing:

None

Rebuttal from the Applicant:

None

Mayor Connolly closed public testimony and the public hearing at 5:51 pm. Lengthy discussion and deliberation ensued.

Council Member Turner made a motion to approve the project, File 26-003, finding that it was in accord with the Priest River City Code as enumerated in the following conclusions of law:

Conclusion 1: The proposed zone change complied with the application contents, hearing procedure, and review standards found in Title 10, Chapter 17.

Conclusion 2: The proposed zone change was in accordance with the comprehensive plan.

The decision was based upon the evidence submitted up to the time the Staff Report was prepared and testimony received at this hearing. They further moved to adopt the reasoned statement as discussed in deliberation at this hearing and the analysis as set forth in the Staff Report (as amended during this hearing) and directed planning staff to draft the reasoned statement to reflect this motion as set forth in Idaho Code section 67-6535, have the Mayor sign, and transmit to all interested parties. This action did not result in the taking of private property.

Council Member Mullaley seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Mullaley made a motion to adopt an Ordinance of Priest River, Idaho, Ordinance Number 643 under suspension of the rules, citing its authority, and providing for the amendment of the Official Zoning Map of Priest River by the reclassification of lands as discussed during this hearing from Mixed-Use Commercial to Commercial, and providing an effective date. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed by the following vote: AYES: Council Member Turner, Council Member Brower, Council Member Mullaley, and Council Member Wagner. NAYS: None. ABSTAINERS: None. ABSENT: None.

B. TO CONSIDER AND TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING PLANNING AND ZONING APPLICATION:

FILE 26-004 – PRIEST RIVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE PRIEST RIVER CITY COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER ADOPTION OF AN UPDATE TO THE CITY OF PRIEST RIVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE SECTION 67-6508, LOCAL LAND USE PLANNING ACT. THE PROPOSED UPDATE WAS INITIATED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND PREPARED BY CITY STAFF, INCORPORATING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, UPDATED DATA, AND POLICY REVISIONS.

RESOLUTION 26-020

Mayor Connolly opened the public hearing at 6:02 pm. City Administrator Gabell explained the reason for the public hearing. He gave a project summary, listed applicable state codes, reviewed agency comments, reviewed the different project phases and timeline, the difference between land use versus zoning, the findings of fact, and the conclusion of law.

Questions from the Council:

Council Member Mullaley asked if the comprehensive plan map could be amended.

Written Testimony:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game had no comment.

Idaho Department of Lands had no issues but provided comments regarding the sections discussing tree canopies and flammable vegetation.

Idaho Department of Water Resources had no issues but provided comments regarding the sections discussing surface water and ground water.

Bonner County Ambulance Service District had no comment.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality had no comment.

Panhandle Health District had no comment.

John MacDonald, 1868 Highway 57, requested to be removed from the City's Area of Impact.

Testimony from Those Supporting:

None

Testimony from Those Uncommitted:

None

Testimony from Those Opposing:

None

Rebuttal from City Staff:

None

Mayor Connolly closed public testimony and the public hearing at 6:14 pm. Discussion and deliberation ensued.

Council Member Brower made a motion to approve the updates to the Comprehensive Plan, File 26-004, as presented or as amended in this hearing, finding that it was in accord with the requirements of Idaho Code §67-6508 and the procedures of Idaho Code §67-6509. This action did not result in the taking of private property. Council Member Mullaley seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Brower made a motion to approve Resolution 26-020, adopting the updates to the Comprehensive Plan, File 26-004, and repealing the previously adopted Comprehensive Plan in its entirety. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. PREVIOUS MINUTES – CC 05/04/26

B. PAYABLES

C. MONTHLY RESERVE TRANSFER – APRIL 2026

D. TREASURER’S MONTHLY REPORT – APRIL 2026

E. RESOLUTION 26-021 – PERSONNEL POLICY AMENDMENTS

F. RESOLUTION 26-022 – COMPUNET – VERKADA STORAGE INCREASE PROPOSAL

Council Member Mullaley made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the correction to the May 4, 2026 minutes as discussed. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After discussion and consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Connolly reminded everyone to vote on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

6. UPDATES

A. PARKS AND TREE COMMISSION

Council Member Wagner gave an update on the Parks and Tree Commission.

B. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police Chief McLain gave an update on Law Enforcement.

C. PUBLIC WORKS

Director of Public Works Sifford gave an update on Public Works.

D. PROJECT UPDATES

1. WELCH COMER – PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Welch Comer provided a written project status update. Various project updates were given.

E. BUILDING & ZONING

City Administrator Gabell gave an update on Building & Zoning.

7. BUSINESS

A. ORDINANCE 644 – AMENDING TITLE 4, CHAPTER 3 – FIREWORKS

Discussion ensued.

Council Member Brower made a motion to adopt Ordinance 644, under suspension of the rules, amending PRCC Title 4, Chapter 3, Fireworks. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously by the following vote: AYES: Council Member Turner, Council Member Mullaley, Council Member Brower, and Council Member Wagner. NAYS: None. ABSTAINERS: None. ABSENT: None.

B. FILE #26-001 SILVER SPIKE 55+ PUD – CLARIFICATION AND RATIFICATION OF DECISION LETTER

City Administrator Gabell explained the request for clarification regarding the decision letter for File #26-001. Lengthy discussion ensued.

Council Member Brower made a motion to approve and ratify the decision letter for File #26-001 as presented, confirming that setbacks shall be measured consistently with PRCC 10-2-2 and 10-4-2. Council Member Mullaley seconded the motion. After consideration and discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

C. PROPOSED RELEASE OF EASEMENT AND LANDOWNER LETTER AUTHORIZATION

This item was moved to executive session for discussion with City Attorney Elsaesser.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

UNDER 74-206 1 (f) Pending Litigation

Council Member Mullaley made a motion to enter executive session under 74-206 1 (f) Pending Litigation at 6:47 pm. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously by the following vote: AYES: Council Member Turner, Council Member Mullaley, Council Member Brower, and Council Member Wagner. NAYS: None. ABSTAINERS: None. ABSENT: None.

RECONVENE

Council Member Turner made a motion to reconvene at 7:07 pm. Council Member Mullaley seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Turner made a motion to approve the Full Release of Easement and Termination of Agreement as presented and discussed. Council Member Mullaley seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Brower made a motion to authorize the issuance of a letter from the City Attorney to the landowner at 265 W. Beardmore Avenue as discussed, regarding the Full Release of Easement and Termination of Agreement. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Council Member Mullaley made a motion to adjourn at 7:09 pm. Council Member Turner seconded the motion. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve minutes of 05/18/26: _____

Second: _____

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

Jeff Connolly
Mayor

Laurel Thomas, CMC
City Clerk/Treasurer