MINUTES
City of St. Helena
Regular City Council Meeting
Tuesday, January 27, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
Vintage Hall Board Room - Second Floor
465 Main Street, St. Helena

A complete video recording of this meeting, except for closed session, can be found at https://sthelena.civicweb.net/Portal/ or by calling the City Clerk at (707) 968-2742. The City Council video is the official record of the Council meeting.

Present: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak

Absent: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dohring called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Dohring led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

City Clerk Andrew Bradley requested that certain agenda items be taken out of order, as they were not heard at the January 13, 2025, Regular City Council meeting, which was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. in accordance with Council protocols. Agenda Items 13.1, 13.2, and 13.3 will be heard prior to the Public Hearing and the remaining agenda items would be heard in regular order. Additionally, item 12.1 will be removed from the agenda to be heard at a date to be continued.

Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on voice vote carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

5.1 Consideration and proposed approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2026.

Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of January 13, 2026. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on voice vote carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

6. PUBLIC FORUM:

Charles Covell, Tom Belt, and Michelle Covell addressed the City Council.

7. REPORTS BY STAFF AND CITY COUNCIL, FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS, and AB 1234 REPORTS:

City Attorney Ethan Walsh reported that there was no reportable action from the January 27, 2026, Special Closed Session Meeting.

Mayor Dohring made an AB1234 report regarding his attendance at the League of California Cities - Mayors and Council Members Academy.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC RECOGNITIONS

8.1 Recognition of Retirement: Director of Community Development Maya DeRosa

CEQA Determination: Exempt
Prepared By: Anil Comelo, City Manager

Mayor Dohring, Vice Mayor Deasy, Council Member Barak and City Manager Comelo recognized Director of Community Development, Maya DeRosa for her service to the City of St. Helena. Director DeRosa will be retiring on February 5, 2026.

9. STAFF BRIEFING & PRESENTATIONS

9.1 Provide status report of the Fiscal 2025-2026, Second Quarter for the City of St. Helena's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

CEQA Determination: Exempt
Prepared By: Joseph Leach, Assistant City Manager/Director of Public Works/City Engineer, Stephanie Killingsworth, Public Works Financial Analyst
Recommendation:
Receive the report and provide direction as appropriate. No Council action is required.

Assistant City Manager/Director of Public Works, Joe Leach, made a brief report.

10. CONSENT ITEMS

Members of the Council or the public may ask that any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless that is done, one motion may be used to adopt all recommended actions. (Roll Call Vote)

10.1 Water Supply and Forecasting - December 2025

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Ian Dale, Environmental Services Tech
Recommendation:
Receive and file.

10.2 Proposed approval of a Resolution approving an Employment Agreement with Ashley Sylvester, ratifying the City Manager's appointment to serve as the Director of Community Services, and authorizing organization structure changes within the Recreation Division of the Community Services Department.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Administrative Services Director
Recommendation:
Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

Prior to the motion, City Attorney Ethan Walsh provided a verbal summary regarding a new Brown Act requirement that department head–level employment agreements be reported verbally. Item 10.2 concerns an employment agreement for the Director of Community Services, Ashley Sylvester. City Attorney Walsh provided the required verbal report.

Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.1 and 10.2. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

10.3 This item was pulled.
~~Approval of a Resolution Authorizing a Temporary Housing Allowance and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Side Letter with the St. Helena Employees Association (SHEA).~~

10.3 Approval of a Resolution Authorizing a Temporary Housing Allowance and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Side Letter with the St. Helena Employees Association (SHEA).

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Administrative Services Director
Recommendation:
Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

Director of Administrative Services, Mandy Kellogg gave a brief report on the item and noted that after a meet and confer with the bargaining group, staff would like to propose to amend the temporary housing allowance from $1,000 to $1,500.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment; public comment was received by Clark McCormick and Tom Belt.

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to approve staff's recommendation and amend the temporary housing allowance to $1,500. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

13. NEW BUSINESS

13.1 Item was heard out of order
Consideration and proposed approval of a resolution approving a facility use agreement between the City of St. Helena and St. Helena Little League for the use of baseball and softball facilities located at Crane Park.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services
Recommendation:
City Staff and the City Attorney recommend approving the proposed resolution.

Director of Community Services, Ashley Sylvester presented the item.

Mayor Dohring opened up public comment; public comment was received from Vincent Georges, James Eyer, Ignacio Del Oro, Dan Wylie, Resident, Cameron Crebs, Boyd Dennington, Josh Devore and Michelle Covell.

The matter was returned to the Council for further deliberation.

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to direct staff to continue to meet with the Little League to work toward a mutually agreeable agreement with input from councilmembers. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

13.2 Item was heard out of order.
Consideration and approval of a Resolution providing approval to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant to convert the Lower Reservoir properties into a public park.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Andrew Bradley, Program Manager
Recommendation:
Consider and Approve the Resolution

Project Manager, Mario Traverso presented on the item.

Mayor Dohring opened public comment; Public comment was made by Donna McCormick and Deanna Griffin.

The discussion was opened to the Council, during which questions and comments were provided.

Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers

ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

Mayor Dohring called for a 10-minute recess at 8:07 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

Following the recess, Mayor Dohring announced that correspondence received from an attorney regarding Item 11.1 raised public safety questions and that he would like the City Attorney to respond to those letters without getting into further discussion about the item at the meeting.

City Attorney Walsh advised the Council that, due to limitations on the number of hearings, this meeting constituted the third hearing on the item. He further noted that the item is subject to a CEQA exemption and the Permit Streamlining Act, requiring Council action prior to March 10, or the item would be deemed approved.

City Attorney Walsh requested that the Council consider a motion to continue the item to the next meeting. As the item was agendized and counted as the third hearing, the Council decided that public comment would be received on the item. Because the discussion was out of order from the agenda, the Council would hear the public comment when the item came up on the agenda.

13.3 Approval of a Resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the City to 1. Contract with a retired annuitant to provide interim support services during a leave of absence pursuant to Government Code section 21221(g), effective February 7, 2026, through the date of retirement; and 2. Approve an Interim Support Services Agreement with James McCann, retired annuitant, for the provision of Director-level services during the leave of absence period.

Approval of a Resolution (Attachment 3) authorizing the City to 1. Ratify the City Manager's appointment of James McCann as Interim Director of Community Development pursuant to Government Code section 21221(h), effective April 4, 2026; and 2. Approve an Interim Employment Agreement with James McCann for service as Interim Director of Community Development following the retirement of the current Director.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Administrative Services Director
Recommendation:
Staff recommends approval of the attached resolutions.

Administrative Services Director, Mandy Kellogg made the presentation.

Mayor Dohring opened the Public Comment; public comment was received by Jim McCann

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to approve the resolution authorizing the City to 1. Contract with a retired annuitant to provide interim support services during a leave of absence pursuant to Government Codes section 21221(g) effective February 7, 2026, through the date of retirement; and 2. Approve an Interim Support Services Agreement with James McCann, retire annuitant, for the provision of Director-level services during the leave of absence period. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to approve the resolution authorizing the City to 1. Ratify the City Manager's appointment of James McCann as Interim Director of Community Development pursuant to Government Code section 21221(h), effective April 4, 2026; and 2. Approve an Interim Employment Agreement with James McCann for service as Interim Director of Community Development following the retirement of the current Director. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak and on roll call carried by the following vote:
AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES:
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto, Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN:
RECUESE:

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS

11.1 Request by City Ventures, LLC for a Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map to subdivide three existing parcels totaling 2.53 acres into 42 lots, 41 for condominium purposes, one lot for common areas to be owned by the future homeowners' association, and one 0.1-acre lettered lot, Parcel A, to contain the riparian corridor not for development. The applicant also requests City Council authorization to pay the water neutrality in-lieu retrofit fee pursuant to SHMC Section 13.12.030. The two items currently before the City Council for review are a Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map and the Water Neutrality in-lieu retrofit fee request.

A Demolition Permit for three existing single-family residences located at 1447, 1505, and 1515 Spring Street was approved by the Planning Commission by a vote of 4-0 at the regularly scheduled December 2, 2025, Planning Commission meeting **(Attachment 4)**. In addition, Minor Design Review of the project architecture, landscaping, and site improvements for the proposed 41 townhomes has been ministerially approved by the Community Development Director **(Attachment 8)**.

CEQA Determination: Exempt
Prepared By: Mike Janusek, Contract Planner
Recommendation:
For the reasons described above, staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the applicant to pay the Water Neutrality In-Lieu Retrofit Fee pursuant to SHMC 13.12.030; and
2. Adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 2) approving, pursuant to a statutory exemption under PRC 21080.66, the requested Vesting Tentative Map No. TSM25-001, File #PL24-065 for the Spring Grove Project.

City Attorney Ethan Walsh clarified that a staff report had been prepared and was available should the Council wish to receive it. He noted that if the Council intended only to take public comment, it would be helpful to receive the public comment first and then provide staff with any further direction. The Council directed that only public comment be taken.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period. Public comments were received by Joshua Parke, Tamara Sorensen, Clark McCormick, Dan Hale, Wayne Leong.

At 9:00 p.m. Mayor Dohring asked for a motion to continue the meeting to 9:30 p.m. Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to continue to the meeting to 9:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak and on voice vote carried by the following vote:
AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto, Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

Public comment resumed and comments were made by Resident not identified, Michelle Covell, Cameron Crebs, Pat Friday and Glenn Smith.

Following the close of public comment, the matter was returned to the Council for questions and discussion.

Council Member Aaron Barak moved to continue to the item to the next City Council meeting of February 10, 2026. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

12. OLD BUSINESS

12.1 This item will be continued to a date unknown.
~~Consideration and adoption of a Resolution authorizing: 1) Amendment #1 to St. Helena Contract FY 2024-055 with Dyett and Bhatia to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the Downtown Specific Plan for an additional $98,840 for a total contract amount not to exceed $598,840; and 2) a budget increase in the amount of $98,840 using General Fund Reserves.~~

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Maya DeRosa, Community Development Director
Recommendation:
Staff recommends Council approve the attached resolution.

13 NEW BUSINESS

13.4 Establishment of 2026 City Council assignments to various City and regional Committees, Boards, and Commissions.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA project
Prepared By: Andrew Bradley, Program Manager
Recommendation:
Attachment 1 provides a list of current intergovernmental appointments. Attachment 2 provides a list of Ad Hoc appointments available to fill. Staff recommends City Council review and provide affirmation or recommended changes to appointments.

Prior to hearing the item Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy move to continue the meeting to 9:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak on voice-vote carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Member Aaron Barak
NOES: None
ABSENT: Council Member Kate Spadarotto and Council Member Billy Summers
ABSTAIN: None
RECUSE: None

City Manager Anil Comelo introduced the item and noted that Council Member Summers would no longer serve on the Napa Valley Tourism Corporation Board. Mayor Dohring agreed to serve in his place and was appointed to the board. No other changes were made to the remaining Committees, Boards and Commissions.

14. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS:
Vice Mayor Deasy made a brief report regarding the Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee and the Napa County Regional Climate Action Committee.

14.1 A. Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) - Executive Board

B. Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) - General Assembly

C. Napa Valley Tourism Corporation (Umbrella for Napa County)

D. League of California Cities – North Bay Division

E. Napa County City Selection Committee

F. Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

G. Napa County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

H. Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA)

I. Napa County Watershed Information Center & Conservancy (WICC)

J. Upper Valley Waste Management Agency

K. Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee

L. Napa County Regional Climate Action Committee

M. Council Ad Hoc and Standing Committee Reports

15. ADJOURNMENT
Mayor Dohring adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Regular City Council
January 27, 2026

CHALLENGING DECISIONS OF CITY ENTITIES

APPROVED:	**ATTEST:**
Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor	Andrew Bradley, City Clerk