



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Matt Romano at 6:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Brandon Smith, Terrie Barr, John McDermott, Vice Mayor JC Tolle and Mayor Matt Romano

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager Pete Carr; City Attorney Greg Einhorn; City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke

Arrived at 6:30: City Planner Scott Friend; Building Official Wyatt Paxton and Nick Paxton; Police Officer Ryan Martindale

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION

MEETING ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 6:02 PM.

CLOSED SESSION ENDED AND RECONVENED TO REGULAR SESSION AT 6:34 PM.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION - Mayor Romano announced that Council met with City Staff and City Attorney Greg Einhorn in Closed Session, to discuss the real property negotiations and anticipated litigation items as noted on the Closed Session agenda. Mayor Romano shared no reportable action.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes for January 21, 2025
- C. Receive and File Recreation Commission Minutes from September 25, 2024

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Barr, to approve the consent calendar as presented. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

PRESENTATION WITH REQUESTED ACTION - Pioneer Community Energy JPA Resolution and Ordinance

Mr. Carr introduced Lisa DeLaby, Community Outreach Manager for Pioneer Community Energy (Pioneer). Ms. DeLaby provided the Council with an update on Pioneer, a Community

Choice Aggregation (CCA) program designed to give local communities greater control over their electricity supply while PG&E remains responsible for transmission and billing. She summarized the findings of the recent feasibility assessment study, highlighted key Council actions and CCA developments, outlined the projected benefits for Orland, and discussed the next steps in the proposed project.

Councilmembers discussed the opt-out process and associated costs, raised concerns about energy brokering, and about government support for renewable energy initiatives.

Orland resident Earl Megginson asked whether Pioneer would have a similar program to the CARE program that he currently has with PG&E.

Orland resident Ron Lane asked about true ups with Pioneer versus PG&E.

County resident Vernon Montague asked if the City has looked into other Community Choice Aggregations to bring to Orland.

Orland resident Carol Hansen asked if the City has looked into reviews from other communities or Pioneer customers.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve the Resolution to formally join Pioneer's expanded Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Motion carried by a voice vote 3-2.

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, McDermott, Vice Mayor Tolle

NOES: Councilmember Barr, Mayor Romano

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve the Ordinance to authorize the CCA program in Orland. Motion carried by a voice vote 3-2.

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, McDermott, Vice Mayor Tolle

NOES: Councilmember Barr, Mayor Romano

PUBLIC HEARING - Title 17 Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Accessory Structures

City Planner Scott Friend presented proposed amendments to the accessory structure standards outlined in Title 17 of the Orland Municipal Code (OMC) to the City Council. He provided background from the December 19th Planning Commission meeting, where City staff initially introduced the idea of modifying the existing standards. At that time, the Commission directed staff to revise the regulations, focusing on maximum height limits and setback requirements for accessory structures.

Mr. Friend emphasized that accessory structures—such as detached garages, storage buildings, and patio covers—are intended to complement primary residences and must adhere to specific design and placement criteria.

He then outlined the key proposed text amendments, which address:

1. **Storage Building Height**
2. **Utility Restrictions**
3. **Prohibition of Dwelling Use**
4. **Runoff Prevention Measures**
5. **Minimum Structure Setbacks**
6. **Setback Exceptions**
7. **Accessory Structure Setbacks Table**

The proposed updates aim to clarify regulations and ensure accessory structures are appropriately integrated within residential properties.

Mr. Friend reported that at its January 16 meeting, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to recommend this item to the Council with a CEQA exemption.

Councilmembers discussed the amendments to accessory structures, including setbacks, and shared their support for certain changes—such as allowing electrical and water services—while also voicing concerns about requirements like matching the roof pitch to the main house and the potential for two-story accessory structures.

Mr. Friend offered to return at a future meeting with graphical depictions for the Council's review.

Mayor Romano opened the public hearing at 7:43 PM.

Orland resident Jan Walker expressed her opinion on front-facing garages in residential homes.

Orland resident Ruth Henderson voiced her opposition to two-story accessory structures, citing concerns about their impact.

County resident Kristi Rumble advocated for property owner autonomy, stating that individuals should have the freedom to make decisions about their own backyards.

County resident Joannie Woods shared that while she personally dislikes front-facing garages, she supports homeowners' rights to use their backyards as they see fit.

Mr. Megginson highlighted the contrast between rural and urban living, emphasizing the importance of consideration for neighbors in more densely populated areas.

Mayor Romano closed the public hearing at 7:48 PM.

Mayor Romano spoke about Accessory Dwelling Unity (ADU) requirements that came from the State and stated that the City would like to align the accessory structure requirements with the ADU requirements. Mr. Friend shared that the Planning Commission's ideas was to allow people to maximize yard space.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to move that the City Council adopt City Council ordinance #2025-02, approving the first reading of Amendments to Title 17 concerning Accessory Structures, as contained herein, and adopt the findings of the Notice of Exemption prepared for the proposed action. Motion failed by a voice vote 2-3.

AYES: Councilmember McDermott, Vice Mayor Tolle
NOES: Councilmembers Barr and Smith, Mayor Romano

Council agreed to table the discussion allowing Council more time to review and requested that Mr. Friend make a few modifications, including adding visuals, and present the revised version for review at a future meeting.

PRESENTATION - Building and Code Enforcement Annual Presentation

Building Official Wyatt Paxton introduced Nicholas Paxton, who will be overseeing local building inspections. Nicholas then provided an overview of the Building Department's operations for 2024.

The department now consists of a Certified Building Official, Plans Examiner, and Inspector—Wyatt Paxton, Owner of Paxton Scott Enterprises—along with Building Inspector Nicholas Paxton and Permit Clerk Deysy Simpson.

In 2024, the Building Department issued 276 permits, generating \$291,290 in permit fees. This included 131 building permits, 75 solar permits, 14 electrical permits, 34 mechanical permits, and 15 plumbing permits. The total valuation of permitted projects for the year reached \$14.3 million.

Looking ahead, the department plans to keep most plan reviews in-house, maintain builder-friendly fee structures, and streamline construction startup times. Additionally, the Fire Department will assist with fire sprinkler inspections.

Nicholas also highlighted key projects under the department's oversight, including new lot inspections for CHIP Housing and The Village-Westhaven, the Duche Nut Co. solar project, and a remodel at Pilot Travel Center.

Council thanked Wyatt and Nick for all they do for the community and City of Orland.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Mid-year Budget Review

City Manager Carr presented the Council with a mid-year budget review for fiscal year 2023/2024, highlighting key financial trends. He reported that General Fund revenues are 5% below budget, with sales tax down 22% and hotel tax (ToT) declining by 11%.

Mr. Carr also noted that General Fund reserves, intended to cover emergencies and economic fluctuations, should exceed \$2 million but currently stand at \$1.25 million.

Measure A is entirely dependent on sales tax revenue, its performance closely mirrors the General Fund, with revenue at 46% and expenditures also at 46% halfway through the fiscal year. The fund balance remains strong at \$1.5 million, with the majority earmarked for future Fire Department capital purchases.

Measure J fund will follow a similar tracking and reporting process as Measure A. Revenue will begin accruing in April but won't be realized until October, with over \$300,000 expected and additional funds arriving quarterly. Authorized expenditures total \$132,000, leaving the fund with a current negative balance of \$132,000.

The Water Fund remains financially stable, with half-year revenues of \$1.04M exceeding expenditures of \$860K, maintaining a \$4.5M fund balance (adjusted down \$348K for the Vac-con cost share).

The Sewer Fund covers operational costs but has limited flexibility for capital improvements. Revenue of \$706K exceeds expenditures of \$498K, leaving a net positive of \$208K, but recent one-time capital expenditures of \$439K for lift stations, \$149K for the Vac-con, and \$30K for pond analysis have lowered the fund balance to \$565K. Staff recommended that Council consider shifting 100% of the Vac-con cost to the Water Fund to alleviate financial strain on the Sewer Fund.

Councilmembers inquired about ongoing water and sewer projects, expressed concerns about slowing revenue and discussed the possible need to increase sewer rates. They also discussed the Sewer Master Plan and directed City staff to obtain a cost estimate for updating it.

Orland Vision and Design

Mr. Carr explained this discussion is in response to Council's interest in developing a visioning and design plan for the City. He noted that while the General Plan (2008-2028) provides long-term guidance, it has been supplemented by updates such as the Housing Element (2024), Safety & Circulation Elements (2021), and Active Transportation Plan (2019).

Mr. Carr sought Council's input on how to proceed, asking whether they preferred presentations on existing plans and standards before moving forward. He also inquired if discussions should be self-facilitated, staff-led, or involve City Commissions, and whether Council would like to hold special workshops or public town hall meetings to engage the community.

Council discussed the challenges of growth and the need to balance development while preserving the community's rural charm. Councilmembers highlighted key priorities, including:

- **Downtown Alleyway Maintenance** – Ensuring upkeep and accessibility.
- **Long-Term Sewer Pond Funding** – Planning for future infrastructure needs.
- **Traffic and Street Design on SR 32** – Exploring the hire of a traffic consultant/engineer.
- **Aesthetics Planning** – Bringing in an architect/designer to create a cohesive vision.
- **Flooding Concerns on Hwy 32** – Coordinating with Caltrans on mitigation efforts.
- **Recreation Enhancements** – Pool resurfacing and expanding sports field availability.
- **Water and Sewer Infrastructure** – Addressing system improvements.
- **Comprehensive Plan Updates** – Reviewing the General Plan, Street Design Circulation Plan, and Water & Sewer Master Plan.
- **Police Station & City Hall Feasibility** – Assessing options for a new facility.

Council directed City staff to explore the feasibility of a separate police station and City Hall and return with recommendations. Council directed staff to obtain recommendations for a traffic consultant for SR 32 and possibly prepare an RFP for an updated circulation plan. Council also expressed interest in working with staff to secure land for parks and recreation. Council asked

staff to look into the price of hiring an urban design planner/architect to assist with developing Objective Design Standards.

Mr. Megginson inquired about the promotional video showcasing the many great aspects of Orland. He also asked about the town's former entrance sign that listed all the local churches.

Ms. Walker emphasized the importance of having a clear vision for Orland and noted that there is no need to rush the process.

Orland resident Alex Enriquez emphasized the importance of long-term visioning for the city's future and raised the possibility of rerouting SR 32 around Orland.

Mr. Lane expressed his thoughts on the visioning process, emphasizing the value of community involvement.

County resident Marilyn Ponci voiced her appreciation for long-term planning efforts and stressed the need for pool resurfacing.

Ms. Woods shared her opinion on skateparks and suggested adding a small play area to Library Park to enhance recreational opportunities.

City Manager Verbal Report

- Mr. Carr shared that a City employee has requested a hearing regarding a personnel action before the Council. The hearing will be on February 18, 2025 at 4:30 PM.
- The Contractor for the water tank plans to pour concrete on Friday February 7th.
- Arts Commission meeting will be meeting one week early on February 12th to be able to get Council a recommendation regarding paint colors and design.
- Mr. Carr shared that he will be at the CalCities City Manager Conference February 5th - 7th.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Glenn County Supervisor Monica Rossman thanked all Councilmembers, City Staff and community members for coming out to support the 1st Countywide Veterans Standdown.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Councilmember Smith:

- Attended New Council Member Training in Sacramento from January 22nd to 24th.
- Attended the Countywide Veterans Standdown.

Councilmember McDermott:

- Will attend the Economic Development Commission meeting February 11, 2025.
- Attended the Fire Department Spaghetti Feed.

- Attended the Veterans Standdown and stated his appreciation for everything Supervisor Rossman did to put the event on.

Councilmember Barr:

- Attended the Fire Department Spaghetti Feed.
- Attended the Cal Cities New Council Member Training in Sacramento.
- Will be attending the Chamber of Commerce Meeting February 6th at Noon.
- The Art Gallery will be open Friday February 7th.
- Asked about the community calendar on the website (Mr. Carr explained that the Chamber has taken over the community calendar, City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke shared she would look into the Calendar on the City website.

Vice Mayor Tolle:

- Watched the Board of Supervisors meeting via Zoom.
- Attended New Council Member Training in Sacramento from January 22nd to 24th.
- Attended the Countywide Veterans Standdown.
- Attended the Fire Department Spaghetti Feed.

Mayor Romano:

- Discussed the \$25K that the City allotted to spay and neuter cats in Orland and asked if the City should re-address with the County or go out on their own...Mayor Romano and Councilmember Barr stated they would like to be part of the adhoc committee to get the ball rolling on getting the money to the cat neutering program.
- Thanked City Police Officers, Public Works crews and Fire Department for being out in the weather for long hours taking care of the community in the bad weather.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:20 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Mathew Romano, Mayor