



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, June 9, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Romano at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL

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

Councilmembers Absent: Councilmember John McDermott

Staff Present: Interim City Manager Janet Wackerman; City Attorney Scott Drexel and City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Consideration of the Appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee for the City Planner Recruitment Process

City Attorney Scott Drexel recommended that the Council form an ad hoc committee composed of two Councilmembers and Interim City Manager Janet Wackerman to conduct private interviews with the applicants. Vice Mayor Tolle expressed interest in including a member of the Planning Commission on the interview panel. Councilmember Barr requested to be appointed to the committee in her role as Planning Commission Liaison and nominated Mayor Romano to serve alongside her.

ACTION: Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, for Councilmember Barr and Mayor Romano to serve on an ad hoc committee for the City Planner recruitment process. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0.

Discussion and Direction Regarding Possible Budget Workshop Special Sessions

Mayor Romano brought forward this discussion for the Council to possibly have a special budget workshop session and affirm that the Council is confident in the process moving forward, while City Staff works on the budget.

Ms. Wackerman reported that following Council direction, staff reviewed the Measure A budget. Based on feedback from department chiefs, some expenses were deferred, eliminating the

projected deficit in the Measure A fund. Ms. Wackerman explained that several costs were shifted to the General Fund, contributing to a broader budget imbalance.

She explained that this approach is reflected in the current budget and acknowledged that while a few areas could still be adjusted, Council had previously been informed, at the April 1st meeting, of the potential for a deficit. Mayor Romano responded that while it may have been mentioned, he is concerned about the size of the shortfall.

Ms. Wackerman noted that for the second consecutive year, the proposed budget includes a reduction in reserves. She reminded Council that the budget will be revisited in October and invited members to share any concerns.

Mayor Romano voiced serious concerns about rising administrative and police costs and stressed the need for a long-term, sustainable financial strategy. He also emphasized the importance of preserving funding for the library and recreation programs while exploring creative funding solutions.

Ms. Wackerman highlighted progress made with the recent hotel study and discussed ongoing efforts to attract development along the I-5 corridor.

Councilmember Smith expressed concern over a potential \$500,000 General Fund deficit, suggesting that anticipated revenue from a new hotel development and the Measure J project could help offset the shortfall.

Vice Mayor Tolle urged Ms. Wackerman to continue working with department heads to identify additional budget cuts. He supported Councilmember Barr's idea of holding special budget workshops, though he recommended beginning that effort in the next fiscal year. He also proposed that departments begin preparing two-year budget plans to help avoid unexpected financial challenges. Councilmember Smith expressed his interest in participating in future department head planning sessions and requested a summary of each department's top-tier goals.

Mayor Romano emphasized the need to "sharpen the pencil," expressing concern that the City is not rich in people that do the front-line work. In response, Vice Mayor Tolle reminded him that just months earlier, he had stated during a Council meeting that the City had funds available and intended to spend them. Mayor Romano clarified that while he believes the City has resources, they need to be allocated more strategically.

Councilmember Barr raised concerns about the City's financial health, noting a decline in reserve funds over the past two years. She emphasized the importance of responsible fiscal management and questioned the necessity of replacing older vehicles, especially if they're still operational, seeking clarity on their status. Vice Mayor Tolle explained that the Public Works Safety Commission serves as a forum for department heads to share their needs, not necessarily for immediate action, but to inform the commission and build support for future initiatives. It's an opportunity to provide insight into upcoming priorities and set expectations moving forward.

Councilmember Barr also called for increased transparency and suggested holding a dedicated budget workshop, citing the lack of clear communication and timely audits in the current process. Councilmember Barr expressed that continued overspending is unsustainable and

urged a more proactive approach to financial planning. She made it clear she could not support a budget that exceeds revenues by \$500,000 when only \$900,000 remains in reserves.

Mayor Romano acknowledged the ongoing transition under Janet's leadership and emphasized that long-standing challenges require creative solutions. He reminded the Council that this is a period of adjustment for everyone and highlighted the importance of finding innovative ways to sustain key services like the Recreation and Library Departments.

Mayor Romano confirmed with the Council that the plan is to review the updated budget and staff changes at the June 17th meeting. If further discussion is needed, additional meetings can be scheduled afterward. The Council agreed to wait until that meeting to assess the next steps.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:39 AM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Mathew Romano, Mayor