



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Romano at 5:31 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Brandon Smith, Terrie Barr, John McDermott (arrived at 5:41), Vice Mayor JC Tolle and Mayor Matt Romano

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: Interim City Manager Janet Wackerman; City Attorney Scott Drexel, Negotiation Attorney Greg Einhorn; City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke
Arrived at 6:30: Police Sergeant Sean Johnson; Library Director Jody Meza, Assistant City Manager Rebecca Webster (via Zoom); Public Works Director Zach Barber and City Engineer Paul Rabo

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION - None

MEETING ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 5:32 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 Scott Drexel in Closed Session to conference with labor negotiators as noted on the Closed Session agenda. Mayor Romano shared that there was no reportable action.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Orland resident Sharon Lazorko shared story about discovering a cat family in her backyard. She expressed appreciation to the community for coming together to support her during the situation and extended special thanks to Ms. Johnson with Hidden Treasures for providing clinic services and taking in the cat family.

County resident Valerie Johnson expressed gratitude for the continued support from the community, provided an update on Hidden Treasures Sanctuary, and requested to be placed on a future Council agenda to discuss potential funding support for the organization.

County resident Stephen Nordbye reminded the Council and the public that the Glenn County Senior Expo will take place on Wednesday, June 18th, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Orland resident Byron Denton shared his positive feedback on the recent change to move public comment to the beginning of the Council meetings. He also expressed appreciation for the way the Council is currently conducting city business and serving the community.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A.** Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B.** Approve City Council Minutes from June 3, 2025
- C.** Approve Special City Council Meeting from June 9, 2025
- D.** Receive and File Economic Development Commission Minutes from April 8, 2025
- E.** Approve the use of Vinsonhaler Park requested by Orland Historical and Cultural Society (OHCS) for Fourth of July Celebration
- F.** Approve Installation of Stop Signs at Various Locations
- G.** Approve Commercial Lawn Mower for Parks
- H.** Approve Tyler/Neptune Software Update

Mayor Romano pulled items F, G, and H from the consent agenda to ask a few clarifying questions. Regarding the installation of new stop signs, he inquired whether the signs would be placed only on east-west traffic, and not on north-south traffic along Woodward. Public Works Director Barber confirmed that the intersections would not be converted into a four-way stop.

Mayor Romano also requested details about the current condition of the park's lawn maintenance equipment. Director Barber explained the need for an additional mower to ensure reliable and efficient park maintenance.

Mayor Romano asked for further information about the proposed Tyler software upgrade. Director Barber explained that the upgrade would improve operational efficiency by streamlining the meter reading process for Public Works staff and enhancing billing capabilities for City staff.

ACTION:

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

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Award Construction Contract for Road M 1/2 Rehabilitation

City Engineer Paul Rabo provided the Council with an update on the upcoming rehabilitation project for Road M ½, extending from Walker Street (State Route 32) to Bryant Street. He noted that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved construction funding at its January meeting, and, in compliance with CTC requirements, a construction contract must be awarded within six months of the approval. While the City will be responsible for covering any project costs exceeding the awarded funding, staff does not anticipate the project surpassing the allocated amount.

Mr. Rabo reviewed the scope of work, which includes roadway excavation; construction of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and residential driveway approaches; along with improvements to the water main, sanitary sewer, storm drainage, and irrigation systems. Additional project components include the placement of aggregate base and hot mix asphalt (HMA) paving, adjustment of utility covers to grade, and installation of pavement markings, roadside signage, and all necessary appurtenances.

Mr. Rabo reported that five bids were received for the project and presented a summary of the bid results. He noted that the engineer's estimated construction cost was \$876,000.00. After careful evaluation, staff determined that the lowest responsible bidder was Lamb Unlimited General Engineering, with a bid of \$835,368.00.

Councilmembers discussed the project and asked questions regarding Lamb Unlimited's previous experience and project references.

Orland resident Byron Denton expressed his confidence in the City Engineer's judgment and supported moving forward with the recommended contractor.

Resident Ron Lane voiced his dislike for the name "Road M ½" and inquired whether the City could consider renaming the road upon completion of the rehabilitation project.

ACTION:

Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to award a construction contract for the Road M ½ Rehabilitation Project to Lamb Unlimited General Engineering; and 2) Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the contract and all other documents necessary to complete the project. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Police and Fire Chief Employment Agreements

Ms. Wackerman informed the Council that the three-year employment agreements for both the Police Chief and Fire Chief are set to expire on June 30, 2025. To ensure there is no lapse in coverage, staff is proposing amendments to both contracts to extend their terms by an additional 90 days.

Mr. Denton shared his appreciation for both the Fire and Police Chiefs.

ACTION:

Vice Mayor Tolle moved, seconded by Councilmember Smith to approve the proposed amendments to the Police Chief and Fire Chief agreements as presented; authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the documents. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Planning Consultant Selection

Ms. Wackerman provided a brief overview of the Planning Consultant selection process. She explained that a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on March 25, 2025, to secure a qualified contractor for comprehensive professional planning services. By the April 28 deadline, the City received ten proposals. Following an initial review, four firms were shortlisted for interviews: CSG, Element Solutions, NorthStar, and SHN.

Over a two-day period, Mayor Romano, Councilmember Barr, Planning Commission Vice Chair Sharon Lazorko, and Interim City Manager Janet Wackerman conducted individual interviews with each of the four firms. Ms. Wackerman noted that all firms brought distinct strengths and capabilities that could serve the City well. However, after careful consideration, NorthStar of Chico was identified as the firm best suited—both in staffing capacity and subject-matter expertise—to meet the planning needs of the City of Orland and its community.

Councilmembers discussed what they liked about NorthStar including the ability to be in the office two days a week, how nice it will be to have one point of contact rather than a large firm, their knowledge and background experience was also a plus.

Mayor Romano thanked team of City staff and Planning Commissioners that helped with reviewing and interviewing firms.

Mr. Denton asked who were the people that helped determine firms and Mayor Romano shared.

ACTION:

Councilmember Barr moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to authorize Interim City Manager to offer a contract to NorthStar. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Draft Budget

Ms. Wackerman shared that at the June 3rd Council meeting, a proposed budget was presented for initial review. Following Council direction, City staff and department heads were asked to reexamine their individual budgets and return with revised versions. As a result, all departments carefully reviewed their budgets and made necessary adjustments.

Ms. Wackerman presented two options for Council consideration:

1. Reallocate Eligible Expenses to Measure A – This would alleviate pressure on the General Fund and eliminate the current deficit. However, it would create a project spending shortfall within Measure A.
2. Adopt the Proposed Budget as a Preliminary Spending Plan – This option would serve as a temporary framework, with a final budget to be developed and adopted by October 1st in collaboration with the newly appointed City Manager. This approach mirrors Glenn County's budgeting practices.

Councilmembers engaged in a discussion, focusing heavily on the importance of maintaining funding for Westside Ambulance and honoring the original promises made to voters through Measures A and J.

Councilmember Smith advocated for moving both of the City's Westside Ambulance subsidies to Measure J, emphasizing the critical role of public safety. He also suggested earmarking funds for police equipment and the future expansion of the public safety facilities. Sergeant Johnson provided an overview of the current vehicle fleet and purchasing process, emphasizing how the department is working to maintain its aging vehicles.

Councilmember Barr voiced concerns over approving an unbalanced budget, stating that the Council should pursue spending cuts across all departments rather than relying on deficit spending or reallocating dedicated funds.

Mayor Romano agreed with Councilmember Smith's position on public safety, asserting that Westside Ambulance and the Orland Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD) are essential services that should be prioritized. He stressed the importance for funding a second Westside Ambulance unit and highlighted the importance of their operational stability. Romano also expressed frustration that Glenn County does not cover 50% of Westside's operational costs, which he believes would be a fair contribution.

Mayor Romano supported using Measure J for ambulance funding but cautioned that doing so could delay much-needed street, park, and library improvements—key investments for long-term growth and community appeal. He proposed a strategic approach: set aside dedicated funding from Measure A for fire apparatus, police fleet, equipment, and safety facilities. Once those priorities are addressed, any remaining funds could be allocated to other needs.

Councilmember McDermott, welcomed the idea of set-asides for essential public safety equipment, noting that it would reduce strain on Measure A and help preserve funding for fire department needs.

Councilmember Smith emphasized that the entire Council supports public safety and reiterated the need to explore long-term solutions for increasing the city's revenue to sustain essential services and future development.

Orland resident Earl Megginson requested clarification regarding Measure J, stating he believed it had been promoted to voters specifically to support ambulance services. He also inquired whether Glenn County contributes funding for those services. Mayor Romano responded to his questions.

Amanda Samons, an Orland resident, expressed support for ensuring that Measures A and J are used exactly as presented to voters. She emphasized that "what's right is not always easy, and what's easy is not always right," urging the Council to stand by the original intent of the measures. Ms. Samons also asked the Council to reflect on their recent decisions that have impacted the budget, citing the termination of the shared librarian agreement with the City of Willows as an example.

Ron Lane, another Orland resident, shared a personal story involving a family member's emergency medical situation to highlight the importance of supporting ambulance services.

Joannie Woods, a county resident, commended the Council for having the best interests of Orland residents at heart. She spoke about the importance of public safety funding and maintaining essential equipment, noting that doing so helps make Orland more attractive to families and supports future community growth.

Jan Walker, an Orland resident, voiced her appreciation for the Council's commitment and vision. She also offered her views on how Measures A and J should be managed moving forward.

Councilmember Terrie Barr called for a series of budget workshops involving staff and proposed a 10% reduction across all departments to address the deficit. Drawing on her experience as a business owner, she stated, "If I ran my business that way, I would have been bankrupt a long time ago." In response, Vice Mayor Tolle, also a local business owner, raised a point of order,

arguing it was inappropriate and “unethical” for Barr to repeatedly reference her private business experience while representing the City.

Assistant City Manager Rebecca Webster noted that updated revenue projections for FY 2024–25 are expected to increase, and clarified that RGS, the City’s CPA firm, had listed expenditures based on previous budgeted amounts, meaning some figures may ultimately come in lower than currently presented.

ACTION:

Vice Mayor Tolle made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Smith, to proceed with Option 2 — maintaining the current budget allocations and adopting the most recent draft as a temporary spending plan, with a final budget to be adopted no later than October 1st. The motion passed by roll call vote: 4-1

Ayes: Councilmembers McDermott, Smith, Vice Mayor Tolle, Mayor Romano

Noes: Councilmember Barr

City Manager Transition Update

Interim City Manager Janet Wackerman provided an update on the City Manager recruitment process. She reported that 6 applications have been received, and the next steps will be that City staff will set up a closed session interview for the Council to interview. Council let Ms. Wackerman know what days and times worked for them.

City Manager Verbal Report

- Nothing to report.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Councilmember Smith:

- Attended the Glenn Groundwater Authority meeting.
- Participated in the joint meeting of the Colusa and Glenn Groundwater Authorities.
- Was unable to attend the Public Works and Safety Committee (PWSC) meeting.
- Attended the Orland Chamber of Commerce meeting.
- Attended the C.K. Price Middle School graduation ceremony.
- Requested to discuss the status and future use of the building located at 824 4th Street (formerly the Hecho building).

Councilmember Barr:

- Attended the Orland Chamber of Commerce meeting.
- Attended the local arts gallery exhibition.
- Emphasized that she does not apologize for being a local business owner and believes applying business principles to city matters is both appropriate and beneficial.

Councilmember McDermott:

- Was unable to attend the Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting on June 10th.

- Announced he will be offering free medical advice at the upcoming Senior Expo, scheduled for June 18th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the fairgrounds.

Vice Mayor Tolle:

- Attended the Public Works and Safety Committee (PWSC) meeting.
- Participated in the Orland Chamber of Commerce meeting.
- Requested that City staff email Councilmembers the informational materials that were provided to voters regarding Measures A and J.

Mayor Romano:

- Expressed appreciation for fellow Councilmembers and City staff.
- Praised the successful operation of the community pool, noting strong attendance and engagement.
- Acknowledged and thanked the Public Works Department for their continued hard work and dedication throughout the city.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:18 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Mathew Romano, Mayor