

The City of Portland
City Council
December 15, 2025
5:30 PM

City Council was called to order by Mayor, Jeff Westlake at 5:30 PM on Monday, December 15, 2025. Roll was called and present were members Matt Goldsworthy, Mike Aker, Ashley Hilfiker, Dave Golden, Ron May, and Michele Brewster. Also, present were Attorney, Wes Schemenaur, Clerk-Treasurer, Lori Phillips.

Absent: Kent McClung

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of City Council minutes from December 1st, 2025

Motion by May, seconded by Hilfiker to approve the City Council minutes from December 1st, 2025 as presented. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Resolution 2025-12 – Additional Appropriations

Motion by Goldsworthy, seconded by Golden to approve Resolution 2025-12, Roll call vote. May voted nay. All others present voted aye.

Additional appropriations were approved for the following: Council Insurance, Council Other Contractual, Plan Commission, Pool Utilities, Pool Repairs & Maintenance, Aviation Salary, Sidewalk Repair & Maintenance and Insurance Surplus.

Draft Ordinance 2025-15; An Ordinance Prohibiting Harboring Livestock in City Limits

A draft ordinance prohibiting harboring livestock in the city limits was presented. The draft outlines livestock that is prohibited and requirements for chickens within the city limits. Council is encouraged to send any request for amendments to Wes. This ordinance will be presented at the January 5th meeting for the first reading.

Jenny Bricker, Jay County Trails; River Path Trail Lighting and Beautification proposal

Jay County Trails requested the approval to move forward with a lighting project along the River Path Trail. This path runs alongside of the Salamonina River from Meridian Street to Wayne Street. The club would like to add posts and lighting to enhance visibility, increase safety and increase beautification to our community. They have secured \$19,000 from The Portland Foundation for this project. They are accepting public donations for the electrical box and also landscaping along the trail. The Street Department / City of Portland will provide the labor for this project. Motion by Hilfiker, seconded by May to move forward with the project. Roll call vote. All present voted aye.

Council Comments

Ron –

1. Noted that he is not going to bite his lip on what he can and can't say during a council meeting. He will speak up and do what he thinks is right without worry of another tort claim being filed.
2. Noted that a resident was scolded by the mayor for clearing snow from the Blaine Pike path. He noted that city employees have since cleared the path. He recommended that the mayor reach out to this individual.

Ashley – Thanked Matt and the Street Department for keeping the city streets plowed and salted.

Dave –

1. Thanked Fire and EMS for their efforts in extinguishing a fire over the weekend.
2. Thanked Jenny Bricker for her time and dedication to the River Path Trail lighting project.

Mayor's Report

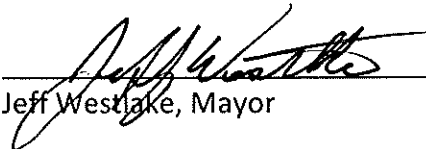
1. Thanked the Street Department for keeping the streets clear.
2. Thanked the Fire Department for their quick response to a recent fire.
3. February 7th – Peggy's Plunge
4. February 15th – Fire Department annual chili lunch

Clerk Treasurer's Report

1. 1782 Notice has been received from DLGF and the 2026 budget has been approved as presented. The combined tax rate is \$1.5283 per \$100 assessed evaluation.
2. Trash Collection schedule next week: Monday – Wednesday will run normal route. Thursday's route will be picked up on Wednesday the 24th. Friday's route will be picked up on Monday the 29th.
3. The Water Office will be closed Wednesday thru Friday next week.
4. Noted the speed limit change on 67 from the high school to city limits. The speed limit was previously 55 mph, but has been decreased to 50 mph; and 30 mph when the school zone light is flashing.
5. Noted that the City of Portland did not receive the 2026 CCMG. INDOT stated that there were more applications than there were funds available. In July, the city will apply for the 2027 CCMG.
6. Reminded council that EMA is looking for volunteers to join their team in updating the County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.
7. Noted that our liability insurance with HCC will go into effect on December 24th. Our annual premium will increase from \$157,000 (Bliss McKnight) to \$219,590. HCC will require an annual upfront payment on the premium.
 - Ron questioned if the reason Bliss McKnight dropped the city was due to all of the tort claims. It was confirmed that this is in fact the reason.
 - Ashley noted that mayor Westlake stated that he doesn't care what it costs the city, he will not terminate the employment of his friends. Mayor confirmed that he said he would not terminate his friends (Dustin Mock and Jeff Hopkins).
8. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and a prosperous 2026 to all!

Adjournment Motion by May, seconded by Golden to adjourn at 6:59 p.m.

APPROVED:



Jeff Westlake, Mayor

ATTEST:



Lori Phillips, Clerk-Treasurer