

# Moscow City Council



Regular Meeting  
~Minutes~

Laurie M. Hopkins  
City Clerk

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208.883.7015

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Monday, March 16, 2026

7:00 PM

Council Chambers  
206 E. Third St.

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**The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Drew Davis, Evan Holmes, Sandra Kelly, Sage McCetich, Scott Sumner

ABSENT: Mayor Hailey Lewis, Bryce Blankenship

STAFF: Bill Belknap, Mia Bautista, Sarah Decker, Renee Tack, Catherine Adams, Mike Ray, Brian Nickerson, Laurie M. Hopkins

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member McCetich led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## CONSENT AGENDA

### 1. All Consent Items (ACTION ITEM)

**A. Approval of Moscow City Council March 2, 2026 Minutes - Laurie M. Hopkins**

**B. Approval of Payment of Claims - Sarah Decker**

**C. Disbursement Report February 2026 - Renee Tack**

Staff presented the February 2026 Accounts Payable Report to the Public Works / Finance Committee on March 9th, 2026. The Committee received the report and recommended approval of the disbursement report.

**ACTION:** Accept the Disbursements Report for the month of February 2026.

**D. Fourth Quarter Financial Report July 1, 2025 to September 30, 2025 for FY2025 - Renee Tack**

Staff presented the financial report for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2025, to September 30, 2025) to the Public Works/Finance Committee on March 9th, 2026. The Committee received the financial report and approved it as presented.

**ACTION:** Accept the FY2025 Fourth Quarter Financial Report.

**E. Historic Preservation Mitigation Bank (HPMB) Grant Program Request – Moscow Water Dept. Bldg. - Alisa Anderson / Mike Ray**

Preservation Idaho is accepting grant applications for the HPMB Grant Program, which provides funding for historic preservation projects across Idaho, with applications due by April 15, 2026. Staff is requesting approval to submit a Type 1 General Preservation Project application to fund a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the city-owned building at 201 North Main Street. The proposed scope of work, estimated at \$6,250, includes preparing the nomination and updating the Idaho Cultural Resource Information System (ICRIS). Staff recommends a 5% cash match of \$310 and a grant request of \$5,940 to support the project. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on March 9, 2026, and recommended for approval.

**ACTION:** Approval to submit a funding request to the Historic Preservation Mitigation Bank Grant Program to support the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the Moscow Water Department Building.

**F. T-Mobile Hometown Grant – East City Park Stage Project - Alisa Anderson**

City staff has identified the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program as a potential funding source to support the construction and public art components of the East City Park Stage project. This five-year, \$25 million initiative awards grants quarterly to small towns for community-driven projects that revitalize historic structures, create downtown assets, or enhance gathering spaces—especially those fostering community identity or attracting investment. The current application period, which is the final round, closes on March 31, 2024, with awards of up to \$50,000 available, and projects must be completed within 12 months. The East City Park Stage project qualifies as an eligible use, aligns with the program’s goals, and addresses a community need. Staff recommends submitting a \$50,000 funding request to help cover project costs. This item was approved by the Public Works/Finance Committee March 9, 2026, and recommended for approval.

**ACTION:** Approval to submit a funding request for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program for \$50,000 for the East City Park Stage project.

Kelly moved and Holmes seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**2. Public Comment (limit 15 minutes)**

Jeff Berley (Moscow) spoke regarding the proposed stage in East City Park and expressed a desire for the Council to pause the project. He cited concerns about financial changes, project costs, and limited public input, noting that 14 responses may not be sufficient to guide decision-making. He encouraged the Council to consider alternative options, delay the vote, and reopen discussion to identify a solution that better reflects community needs and character. He emphasized the importance of developing a project the community can take pride in.

Jonathan Honisch (Moscow) said he agrees with Mr. Berley.

**3. Citizen Commission Report - Planning and Zoning Commission - Mike Ray / Dennis Wilson**

Ray introduced Dennis Wilson, chair of the P&Z Commission. Wilson listed the members of the Commission. He spoke on the Senate Bill 1403 passed in 2024 which significantly changed the Area of City Impact requirements. The Commission worked together with the county to comply with the requirements and the amendments were adopted by the County Commissioners on December 2, 2025. Recently the Commission has been working on duplex code amendments and review of ADU construction trends.

**4. U.S. Highway 95 Palouse Region Study Report — Janet Zarate, ITD District Two**

Janet Zarate wanted to advertise and invite the public to the ITD public input meeting. Developed concepts will be presented for near-term, mid-term and long-term highway designs. There is also an online public meeting. The study is from Snow Rd to the Benewah County line. They will also give an update about the Highway 8 traffic study.

**5. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Presentation (ACTION ITEM) - Renee Tack /Nick Nicholson**

Presnell Gage PLLC, the City's auditors, will be presenting the City's FY2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), which includes any significant changes regarding the annual audit and outlining comparative changes from the FY2024 ACFR. The City has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the ACFR for 22 consecutive years. After approval, staff will submit the FY2025 ACFR for consideration for the award. The accompanying final draft of the FY2025 ACFR is submitted for City Council review.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:** Accept the City of Moscow audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for FY2025 as presented, or take other action deemed appropriate.

Tack introduced the item as written above and introduced Nick Nicholson.

Nicholson outlined the roles of the City and auditor and reported that as of FY2025, the City's government-wide net position increased by \$21.1 million (11%) to \$211.9 million, largely due to accumulation for current and future capital projects. Restricted net position includes \$3.0 million in governmental activities (debt service, highway tax, pension, and recreation) and \$50.4 million in business-type activities (primarily utility capital projects).

Total FY2025 government-wide operating expenses were \$44.75 million. The General Fund balance is approximately \$7 million, with \$5.2 million reserved for required working capital and about \$349,000 unassigned. Enterprise funds (water, sewer, storm, sanitation) are stable, with revenues and expenditures leveling out while continuing to accumulate for capital projects.

Staff noted there is no time limit on capital accumulation, as larger projects may take years to fund, with annual contributions approved through the budget process. The unassigned General Fund balance was described as healthy but relatively limited (about one month of operations). Nicholson also noted that receiving the financial reporting award is uncommon and beneficial, as it can improve lender confidence and result in more favorable bond rates.

Kelly moved, Sumner seconded, to approve the City of Moscow audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for FY2025. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

**6. Mass Notification System Memorandum of Understanding (ACTION ITEM) - Brian Nickerson**

The City of Moscow desires to partner with Latah County to secure and maintain an emergency mass notification system that can be utilized to inform residents of emergency situations. Under the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) the City and Latah County would equally fund the selected mass notification system and have independent access to utilize the system for both City and County emergency events. This item was included within the City's FY2026 budget. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on March 9, 2026, and recommended for approval.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:** Approve the MOU with Latah County, or take other action deemed appropriate.

Nickerson introduced the item as outlined above. He explained that the program is widely used in the Pacific Northwest for emergency notifications. Alerts can be issued from vehicles; however, use is restricted to trained personnel. The system is not subscription-based and instead utilizes geomapping to target specific areas for each notification.

Kelly moved to approve the MOU with Latah County. McCetich seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

## 7. Paradise Creek Maintenance Program Plan (ACTION ITEM) - Tyler Palmer

Paradise Creek is a critical ecological, hydrological, and stormwater conveyance feature within the City of Moscow. The creek flows approximately 19 miles from Moscow Mountain through the City before joining the South Fork Palouse River in Pullman, Washington. The City is regulated as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) under an Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (IPDES) Permit. Paradise Creek is a critical stormwater feature covered by the City's IPDES permit. The maintenance and management of Paradise Creek is essential to compliance with the Clean Water Act and the City's MS4 Permit, implementation of applicable Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements, and protection of designated beneficial uses under Idaho Water Quality Standards (IDAPA 58.01.02). The Paradise Creek Maintenance Program Plan establishes a structured, adaptive framework for routine maintenance, capital improvements, regulatory coordination, beaver management, and public engagement to address regulatory requirements, enhance flood risk mitigation and infrastructure protection, and preserve habitat and riparian function. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on March 9, 2026, and recommended for approval.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS:** Adopt the Paradise Creek Maintenance Program Plan, or take other action deemed appropriate.

Staff reported recent record rainfall and flooding highlighted the need for a more proactive approach to maintaining Paradise Creek, the City's primary drainage system. Data from the USGS gauge (since 1979) shows that many of the highest flood events, including five of the six largest, have occurred in the past decade, indicating a trend toward more intense rainfall-driven flooding.

Following the 2019 flood, the City completed a hazard mitigation study. No single infrastructure solution was identified; instead, the study emphasized ongoing creek maintenance as the most effective strategy. Paradise Creek is highly reactive, carries significant sediment, and presents challenges due to limited City ownership and access along its 19-mile corridor.

The proposed plan establishes a formal maintenance framework, dividing the creek into 15 segments to prioritize work based on risk and conditions. It includes: 1) Routine inspections (post-storm, monthly, annual); 2) Sediment and vegetation management; 3) Capital improvement planning (2027–2041); 4) Beaver management policy emphasizing coexistence and non-lethal methods; 5) Public outreach, access planning, and coordination with property owners.

Staff emphasized that public outreach will be a significant component of implementation. Anticipated efforts include direct mailings, social media updates, community meetings, and on-site walkthroughs with affected property owners. Outreach will increase as projects move from planning to construction, with clear communication on timing, impacts, and access needs. Ongoing education will also focus on creek stewardship and appropriate practices near the waterway.

Staff noted the program will be resource-intensive and require coordination with private property owners, regulatory compliance, and phased implementation. Estimated costs vary by segment, with work anticipated every other year to balance capacity and rate impacts.

Benefits include improved regulatory compliance, reduced emergency maintenance, enhanced flood resilience, and a clearer long-term capital plan. Flooding cannot be eliminated, but impacts can be better managed and predicted.

Kelly moved to adopt the Paradise Creek Maintenance Program Plan. Homles seconded. Palmer said you are not authorizing funds. appropriation of funds will be through the annual budget. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

**REPORTS**

**City Council**

*Transportation Commission* – Kelly said the commission received a letter regarding traffic concerns around Lena Elementary.

*Planning & Zoning Commission* – McCetich said the Commission continued discussions on duplex codes.

*Moscow Tree Commission* – Holmes said the Commission is getting ready for Arbor Day and set dates for tabling at the Farmers Market.

*Fair & Affordable Housing Commission* – Holmes said the Commission will be able to host the annual renter’s rights conference with the help of funding from other sources. They are watching state legislation which could affect some of their literature.

*Moscow Arts Commission* – Sumner said they did not have a meeting but are working on a lot of RFP's.

*Farmers Market Commission* – Davis said the Commission is discussing policies and procedures and getting ready for upcoming juries.

*Moscow Volunteer Fire Department* – Davis said they are talking about ways to train and planning for the year.

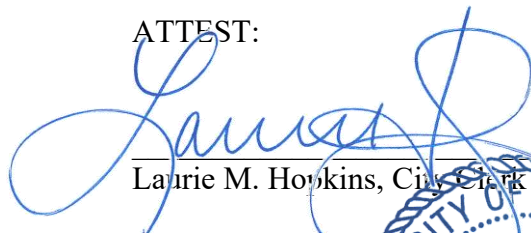
*Moscow Urban Renewal Agency* – Davis said the Agency approved the budget for the year and are reviewing upcoming projects.

**ADJOURN**

It was moved, seconded and mutually agreed upon to adjourn at 8:32 p.m.

  
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Hailey Lewis, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Laurie M. Hopkins, City Clerk

