

**CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL**

Mayor Shannon Reynolds called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers David M. Viafore, Brett L. Wittner, Karen Mauer-Smith, Nikki Bufford, and Jim Andrews were present. Councilmember Karen Mauer-Smith attended the meeting virtually. Councilmember Hunter T. George was absent and excused.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S REPORT****A. Officer Ortega Swearing-In Ceremony**

Police Chief Celis introduced Officer Kennedy Ortega and provided a brief background of his law enforcement experience to the Council. Mayor Reynolds swore Officer Ortega in as a Fircrest Police Officer.

**B. Proclamation: Arbor Day 2025**

Councilmember Andrews read the proclamation titled Arbor Day 2025 into the record. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to authorize the Mayor's signature on the proclamation proclaiming the third Saturday of November as Arbor Day in the City of Fircrest; seconded by Councilmember Bufford.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments. Councilmember Bufford thanked staff for their continued work in maintaining the Tree City designation. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**CITY MANAGER COMMENTS**

City Manager Masko reported on several items, including the upcoming Municipal Court Judge position interviews, the Public Defender Request for Proposals, the AWC Elected Officials Essentials Workshop, and the Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project. She highlighted that the City has received Tacoma Public Schools' conditional use permit and major variance applications. In accordance with the Fircrest Municipal Code, the City will mail notice to all property owners within 600 feet of the site and post the site within 14 days.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

- Public Works Director Bemis provided brief updates on several capital projects. He reported that the Regents Boulevard Traffic Signal Project received its Notice to Proceed, and the project webpage will be updated once timelines are confirmed. He stated that the Alameda Avenue Sidewalk project will be advertised for construction bids soon. Public Works Director Bemis reported on the Emerson West Sidewalk project and the request to de-obligate funds, citing significant schedule delays, administrative burden, and cost exposure that are not fiscally responsible. He expressed appreciation for the Local Programs' partnership and reiterated Fircrest's commitment to pursuing future sidewalk projects.

Discussions included the process for de-obligating funds, the requirement for Council action, any outstanding work, the legal risks of de-obligating the funds, following the correct procedure to avoid future issues, communicating with PSRC, and maintaining the project on the City's Transportation Improvement Program.

Public Works Director Bemis confirmed that the project design is complete and owned by the City. Staff recommends not moving forward with construction.

**Councilmember Viafore MOVED to approve the de-obligation of the funds as proposed by City staff and to send a letter to the appropriate parties explaining the action of the City Council; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

- Police Chief Celis reported on several items, including an update on calls for service within the City, the Police Department's Halloween participation, and the status of the Police Records Technician position. Lastly, he stated the Axon auto-tagging integration with South Sound 911 is operational.
- Finance Director Deskins reported that the State Auditor was on site today to begin the annual audit. The Auditor met with staff to review materials and outline the items still under review. There was a brief discussion on this year's areas of emphasis, which will likely be communicated during the entrance interview.

**COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS**

- Councilmember Andrews; no comment.
- Councilmember Bufford reported on the roundtable discussion hosted by County Executive Mello at the Fircrest Community Center, highlighting topics such as interjurisdictional collaboration, coordination, and federal funding challenges affecting PSRC. Lastly, she commented on the University Place Veterans Day Ceremony and encouraged future Council participation.
- Councilmember Wittner; no comment.
- Councilmember Mauer-Smith; no comment.
- Councilmember Viafore commented on the City's website and noted ongoing issues with the current webpage. He expressed frustration with the outdated and confusing site.
- Mayor Reynolds; no comment.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Mayor Reynolds invited public comment. There was none.

**COMMITTEE, COMMISSION, AND LIAISON REPORTS**

**A. Administration**

There was no report.

**B. Built Environment, Planning, and Building**

Councilmember Wittner reported that he attended the November Planning Commission meeting to learn about STEP housing and noted that the City was required to adopt STEP housing provisions during the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update, but did not complete this work. The City Council will be briefed at the December 9, 2025, regular meeting, and STEP housing is expected to be a topic during the joint Council-Planning Commission meeting in February.

**C. Finance and Information Technology**

There was no report.

**D. Other Liaison Reports**

Mayor Reynolds reported that the Pierce County Regional Council will begin their elections this month.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Mayor Reynolds requested that the City Clerk read the Consent Calendar:

- A. Approval of Check No. 14543 through 14544 in the amount of \$10,105.37
  - Approval of Check No. 223679 through 223747 in the amount of \$195,555.80.
  - Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$173,980.94.
- B. Approval of October 20, 2025, Special Meeting minutes
  - Approval of October 28, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes
- C. Setting a Public Hearing on November 25, 2025, at 7:15 P.M. or shortly thereafter to receive comments on the proposed House Bill 1293 Design Review Regulations and ADU Code Amendments

**Councilmember Bufford MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar; seconded by Councilmember Viafore.**

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. To receive comments on the 2026 Preliminary Budget**

At 7:35 P.M., Mayor Reynolds opened the public hearing. Finance Director Deskins briefed the Council on the 2026 preliminary budget, stating that the public hearing was to receive comments on the proposed budget. Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public testimony; none were provided. At 7:36 P.M., Mayor Reynolds closed the public hearing.

Mayor Pro Tempore Bufford invoked Rule 20. Order of Business from the Fircrest City Council Rules and requested to move the agenda item to proceed with 13A. Resolution No. 1995: Westside Disposal Amendment #7. There were no objections from the Council.

**Resolution No. 1995: Westside Disposal Amendment #7**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment provides alternative cleanup options with Westside Disposal. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 1995, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #7 to the Contract with Westside Disposal, Inc. for Garbage, Recyclables, and Yard Waste Collection; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments. Councilmember Viafore commented on community outreach regarding the alternative cleanup options. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**B. To receive comments on the proposed water rate adjustments**

At 7:40 P.M., Mayor Reynolds opened the public hearing. Finance Director Deskins briefed the Council on the proposed water rate adjustments, stating that the public hearing was to receive comments on the 2026 proposed water rate adjustments. Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public testimony; none were provided.

At 7:42 P.M., Mayor Reynolds closed the public hearing.

**C. To receive comments on House Bill 1998 Co-Living Amendments**

At 7:43 P.M., Mayor Reynolds opened the public hearing. Lindsey Sehmel, Ethos PNW, briefed the Council on House Bill 1998 Co-Living Amendments, stating the public hearing was to receive comments on House Bill 1998 Co-Living Amendments. Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comments. There was a brief discussion on the parking requirements. Mayor Reynolds invited public testimony; none were provided.

At 7:57 P.M., Mayor Reynolds closed the public hearing.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS****A. Resolution No. 1995: Westside Disposal Amendment #7**

This agenda item was moved under the Public Hearing section.

**B. Ordinance No. 1744: FMC 6.08.140 Solid Waste Special Events Amendment**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed ordinance and highlighted that the amendments are consistent with the contract language as revised in Amendment #7. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Ordinance No. 1744, amending Fircrest Municipal Code 6.08.140 relating to the collection and disposal of solid waste, recyclable materials, and yard waste for special events, providing for severability, and establishing an effective date; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. Councilmember Viafore commented on public education on the alternative cleanup options. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).****C. Ordinance No. 1745: Adopting 2026 Property Tax Levy**

Finance Director Deskins briefed the Council on the proposed ordinance and highlighted that the ordinance allows the City to levy the necessary amount to fund City operations in 2026. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adopt Ordinance No. 1745, fixing the amount of the annual ad valorem tax levy necessary for the fiscal year 2026, providing for severability, and establishing an effective date; seconded by Councilmember Bufford.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. Councilmember Andrews expressed concern about increasing taxation at multiple government levels and the impact on its citizens. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (5-1), with Councilmember Andrews dissenting.**

**D. Ordinance No. 1746: Adopting 2026 Salary Ranges for Non-Union Employees**

Finance Director Deskins briefed the Council on the proposed ordinance and highlighted that the ordinance provides a 2.7% Cost of Living Adjustment for non-represented employees based on the Consumer Price Index – Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the year ending June 2025. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Ordinance No. 1746, amending Fircrest Municipal Code 2.44.050 relating to salaries of non-union City employees and amending Fircrest Municipal Code 2.44.090 relating to hourly rates of pay for casual and seasonal employees; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).****E. No. 1747: Adopting 2026 Salary Ranges for Municipal Court Judge and Civil Service Examiner**

Finance Director Deskins briefed the Council on the proposed ordinance and noted that it updates the monthly salary ranges for the Municipal Court Judge and Civil Service Chief Examiner based on the Consumer Price Index – Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the year ending June 2025.

**Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Ordinance No. 1747, amending Fircrest Municipal Code 2.44.070 updating the Municipal Court Judge and Civil Service Chief Examiner monthly rates of pay, providing for severability, and establishing an effective date; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. Councilmember Viafore commented on the monthly compensation for the Municipal Court Judge position. Staff clarified that the two compensation amounts include one reflecting service with the Ruston court contract and one without. There was a brief discussion on the photo enforcement program workload and whether funds for the program were included in the upcoming year's budget. Staff stated that a budget amendment will be required. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).****F. Resolution No. 1996: NW GIS Consulting Amendment #10**

Public Works Director Bemis briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that there is no rate increase for 2026. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 1996, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #10 to the Professional Services Agreement with NW GIS Consulting for on-call GIS services; seconded by Councilmember Bufford.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).****G. Resolution No. 1997: Gunderson Law Office Amendment #1**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment includes a \$500 per month rate increase. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 1997, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #1 to the Prosecutor Services Agreement with Gunderson Law Office PLLC for prosecutor services; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.**

Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. There was a brief discussion on the City of Ruston's cost share of the agreement. City Manager Masko stated that she would review the court contract to confirm the exact cost share percentage. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**H. Resolution No. 1998: Mahoney Planning Amendment #2**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment increases the total cost of services to continue technical in-house services. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 1998, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #2 to the Professional Services Agreement with Mahoney Planning for on-call planning consulting services; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. There was a brief discussion on the remaining 2025 funds rolling forward to 2026. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**I. Resolution No. 1999: CodePros Contract Amendment No. 1**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment extends the agreement through December 31, 2026, and provides services related to unsafe dwellings and structures. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 1999, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #1 to the Professional Services Agreement with CodePros, LLC for Building Official and inspection services; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment; none were provided. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**J. Resolution No. 2000: Changing the Time of the 12/23/25 Regular Meeting**

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and noted that the time change would allow the City Council to conduct its regular meeting earlier in the day during the holiday week. **Councilmember Bufford MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2000, changing the time of the December 23, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting from 7:00 PM to 4:00 PM; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Reynolds invited Councilmember comment. Mayor Reynolds requested a headcount to confirm a quorum for the December 23, 2025, meeting. A quorum was confirmed. Mayor Reynolds invited public comment; none were provided.

**The Motion Carried (6-0).**

**CALL FOR FINAL COMMENTS**

There were no final comments.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session scheduled.

**ADJOURNMENT**

NOVEMBER 12, 2025

FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR 7

Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Bufford.

The Motion Carried (6-0).

S. Reynolds

Shannon Reynolds, Mayor

A. Burkhart

Arlette Burkhart, City Clerk