



**CITY OF ARCATA  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES**

**October 1, 2025, 6:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber  
736 F Street, Arcata**

Present: Mayor Stillman, Vice Mayor White, Councilmember Atkins-Salazar, Councilmember Matthews, Councilmember Schaefer

Staff Present: City Manager Perry, Assistant City Manager Miller, Deputy City Attorney Goldstein, City Engineer Khatri, Director of Community Development Loya, Director of Environmental Services Sinkhorn, Assistant City Engineer Caisse, Senior Project Manager Kadlecik, IT and Digital Media Specialist Carrillo, City Clerk Varley, Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk Redfern

**A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Arcata was held on the above date at 6:01 p.m. with Mayor Stillman presiding. Notice of this meeting was posted on September 26, 2025.**

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**1. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Mayor Stillman read a statement acknowledging that Arcata sat on ancestral Wiyot land.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

Mayor Stillman led the pledge of allegiance.

On inquiry by City Clerk Varley, prior to Roll Call, Mayor Stillman stated that there was nothing to report out from the closed session items that occurred during the October 1, 2025, City Council Special Meeting.

**3. CEREMONIAL MATTERS**

**a. Proclamation in Recognition of Fire Prevention Week October 5–11, 2025.**

Councilmember Atkins-Salazar read the proclamation and presented it to the Fire Chief Chris Emmons with the Arcata Fire District.

**b. Proclamation Recognizing October 2025, as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.**

Councilmember Schaefer read the proclamation and presented it to Amber Campbell, Finance and HR Director for Humboldt Domestic Violence Services.

**c. Proclamation Recognizing September 15–October 15, 2025, as Latinx Heritage Month.**

Vice Mayor White read the proclamation and presented it to Henry Lagunas with Cal Poly Humboldt.

**4. STAFF REPORTS**

**a. Receive a Presentation from Bartle Wells Associates on the Results of the City of Arcata Water and Wastewater Rate Study.**

City Manager Merritt Perry announced that this item would be postponed to a future meeting due to the consultant encountering a travel delay.

**b. Other Staff Reports.**

None were received at this time.

**5. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS [EARLY - TIME LIMITED]**

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

**Public Comment:** Andrew W. Christian, Pat Kanzler, Allison Talbot, Mike Edwards, Lea Nagy, Shawn Leon, and two unidentified members of the audience.

Mayor Stillman closed the oral and written communications [early - time limited] period.

**6. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Vice Mayor White requested that Items H and I be pulled from the Consent Calendar for further discussion.

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

There being none, Mayor Stillman closed the public comment period.

**ON MOTION BY SCHAEFER, SECONDED BY WHITE, AND WITH A UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE, THE COUNCIL ADOPTED [CONSENT CALENDAR] ITEMS A (MINUS H AND I) THROUGH L. AYES: STILLMAN, WHITE, ATKINS-SALAZAR, MATTHEWS, SCHAEFER. NOES: NONE. ABSENT: NONE. ABSTENTIONS: NONE.**

**a. Approval to Waive Reading of the Text and Consent to Read by Title Only for Any Ordinance on this Agenda.**

**b. Approve the Minutes of the City Council Special Meeting Study Session of September 10, 2025.**

**c. Approve the Minutes of the City Council Special Meeting of September 15, 2025.**

- d. **Approve the Minutes of the City Council Special Meeting of September 17, 2025.**
- e. **Approve the Minutes of the City Council Meeting of September 17, 2025.**
- f. **Bi-Weekly Report on Disbursements.**
- g. **Award a Contract for Zoning Updates Planning Services to Lisa Wise Consulting, Inc. in the Amount of \$549,711; Authorize an Increase up to 10% for Contingencies; and Approve Necessary and Associated Related Actions.**
- j. **Approve the Fiscal Year 2025/26 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Book.**
- k. **Approve Signing on to the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County’s Proposed Letter Supporting All Humboldt County Community Members; and Authorize the Mayor to Sign the Letter.**
- l. **Approve an Annual Proclamation in Recognition of the National Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Month; and Add the Proclamation to the Council-Approved List.**
- h. **Adopt Resolution No. 256-12 Approving Guidelines for the HOME Investment Partnership Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program – Not a Project Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).**

Vice Mayor White commended City staff for the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program.

**WHITE MOVED AND SCHAEFER SECONDED TO APPROVE ITEM H [ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 256-12 APPROVING GUIDELINES FOR THE HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TBRA) PROGRAM – NOT A PROJECT PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)].**

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

**Public Comment:** Joanne McGarry

Mayor Stillman closed the public comment period.

**THE MOTION PASSED ON A UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE. AYES: STILLMAN, WHITE, ATKINS-SALAZAR, MATTHEWS, SCHAEFER. NOES: NONE. ABSENT: NONE. ABSTENTIONS: NONE.**

- i. **Ratify the Employment Agreement with Christian Ortega for the Position of Chief of Police, for the Term of October 12, 2025, to October 31, 2029.**

Vice Mayor White congratulated Lieutenant Ortega on his promotion.

**ATKINS-SALAZAR MOVED AND MATTHEWS SECONDED TO ACCEPT [ITEM] I [RATIFY THE EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WITH**

**CHRISTIAN ORTEGA FOR THE POSITION OF CHIEF OF POLICE, FOR THE TERM OF OCTOBER 12, 2025, TO OCTOBER 31, 2029].**

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

**Public Comment:** Joanne McGarry, and Dan Shahin.

Mayor Stillman closed the public comment period.

**THE MOTION PASSED ON A UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE. AYES: STILLMAN, WHITE, ATKINS-SALAZAR, MATTHEWS, SCHAEFER. NOES: NONE. ABSENT: NONE. ABSTENTIONS: NONE.**

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Award a Contract in the Amount of \$300,000 to Smith Group, Inc. for Professional Services for Planning, Community Outreach and Preliminary Concept Design for the Reconnect Arcata Project.**

City Engineer Khatri presented to the Council regarding the scope of work and proposed funding for the Reconnect Arcata Project.

Director Khatri responded to inquiries and comments from the Council.

The Council received a brief presentation from Assistant City Manager Miller touching on the project's potential funding.

Director Miller responded to inquiries and comments from the Council. The Council continued to deliberate.

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

**Public comment:** Dan Shahin.

Mayor Stillman closed the public comment period.

City Manager Perry responded to inquiries and comments from the Council.

**WHITE MOVED TO AWARD A CONTRACT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$300,000 TO SMITH GROUP, INC., FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR PLANNING, COMMUNITY OUTREACH, AND PRELIMINARY CONCEPT DESIGN FOR THE RECONNECT ARCATA PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE ALL APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS.**

The Council deliberated delaying the award of the contract and instead providing direction to staff to obtain a scope of work for the proposed \$300,000 contract and contact Cal Poly Humboldt to ascertain their willingness to support the project.

**STILLMAN SECONDED THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR.**

**THE MOTION PASSED ON A FOUR-TO-ONE VOICE VOTE. AYES: STILLMAN, WHITE, ATKINS-SALAZAR, SCHAEFER. NOES: MATTHEWS. ABSENT: NONE. ABSTENTIONS: NONE.**

**8. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS [CONTINUED]**

Mayor Stillman invited public comment.

**Public Comment:** Emily Lin, Laurie Birdsong, Lev, Rebecca Gomez, Joanne McGarry, and Dan Shahin.

Mayor Stillman closed the oral and written communications [continued] period.

**9. COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Presenters:** Schaefer, Matthews, Atkins-Salazar, White, and Stillman.

City Manager Perry also provided a report.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Rhea Varley

City Clerk