



**City of Durham**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 24, 2026**

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**A. OPEN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING.**

Mayor Joshua Drake opened the regular council meeting at 7:31 PM at the Juanita Pohl Center in Tualatin.

**B. ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS.**

Councilors present: Mayor Joshua Drake, Council President Leslie Gifford, Councilors Gary Paul, David Streicher (via Teams), and Sean Lee

Councilors absent: None

Staff present: City Administrator Jordan Parente, Administrative Assistant Wyatt Bean, City Attorney Ashleigh Dougill

**C. COUNCIL MINUTES.**

Council considered the January 27, 2026, City Council meeting minutes. Council President Gifford moved to adopt the minutes, and Councilor Paul seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**MO 022426-01**

**D. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS.**

Council reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule, including the March 10, 2026, regular Planning Commission meeting, the March 24, 2026, City Council work session, and the March 24, 2026, regular City Council meeting

**E. PUBLIC FORUM.**

Mayor Drake opened the public forum and reviewed the public comment process. Most testimony focused on the proposed tree ordinance, with residents expressing differing views on how well the draft balanced public safety, property owner concerns, and tree canopy preservation.

A resident of Afton Commons, and the chair of the tree ordinance committee, said she believed the draft reflected many of the committee's recommendations and described the work as thoughtful and constructive.

Several residents raised questions about the ordinance's terminology, purpose, and legal implications. Questions included how "preserved tree" would be defined and if the City would be liable if a permit were denied and damage later occurred. A resident asked what problem the ordinance was intended to address and if it was achieving that. Another resident asked whether pending applications would be reviewed under the existing or proposed code.

One attendee spoke about regional emergency water resilience. He explained that Tigard Water District is working with Durham, King City, and Tigard on earthquake preparedness and emergency water station planning and stated that the district was prepared to help fund those efforts.

Several residents from the Heron Grove areas described ongoing concerns about tree failures, overhanging branches, roof damage, and perceived safety risks near homes. Some said the draft ordinance gave too much discretion to the City, placed too much emphasis on canopy preservation

over resident safety, and too narrowly limited when trees could be removed. One Heron Grove resident commented that the ordinance functioned to preserve trees and lacks public safety measures.

Additional letters raised concerns related to hazard criteria, disease tracking, homeowner costs, and dangerous tree removal. One letter expressed support for canopy preservation and the use of a neutral City arborist.

**F. PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE.**

City Administrator Parente reported there was no regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on February 10, 2026.

**G. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 273-26 AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE REMOVAL OF TREES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AND NOT CONNECTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND.**

Council considered the first reading of Ordinance 273-26. Mayor Drake stated that the existing tree code was outdated and that the proposed ordinance was the result of extensive public discussion over many months, prompted in part by recent tree failures and broader concerns about safety, permitting, and long-term tree management.

City Administrator Parente explained that while some citizen requests, like tracking localized tree issues, are not in the new ordinance they do align with the intent. However, Durham has scarce resources and additional cost items will need to be covered by programmatic fees.

City Attorney Ashleigh Dougill clarified that applications already submitted would be processed under the code in effect at the time of filing, and that some emergency threats may be addressed under provisions of the nuisance ordinance. She said that liability for trees on private property generally remains with the property owner. Mr. Parente encouraged residents to apply for a new permit if the condition of a tree previously denied changes.

Council discussed root rot, hazard detection, emergency removal standards, fees, and the balance between resident safety, property rights, and canopy preservation. Council also discussed the City's limited staffing and financial capacity, the need for permit fees that cover the costs of processing a permit, and that fees for the new code will be established by a future resolution separate from the ordinance itself.

Before the motion, City Attorney Dougill read into the record several revisions made during the work session held before the meeting, including edits to definitions, permit language, review procedures, application requirements, emergency enforcement language, and the penalty section. Council President Gifford moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance 273-26 as edited by the City Attorney, and Councilor Paul seconded. The motion passed 4-1, with Mayor Drake, Council President Gifford, Councilor Paul, and Councilor Lee voting in favor, and Councilor Streicher voting against.

**MO 022426-02**

**H. TIGARD WATER DISTRICT PLANS & WAB BOARD SUPPORT - COUNCILOR STRIECHER.**

Councilor Streicher presented Tigard Water District's request that Durham support two emergency water preparedness projects and support King City becoming a permanent member of the Water Advisory Board. Council and staff clarified that supporting the proposals would not commit Durham to immediate costs but would express policy support for projects largely funded by Tigard Water District.

Councilor Streicher moved that the City of Durham endorse the Tigard Water District proposal dated February 22, 2026, calling for an emergency water station on Bull Mountain and a water filtration trailer near Cook Park. Council President Gifford seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Councilor Streicher then moved that the City of Durham support King City becoming a permanent member of the Water Advisory Board. Councilor Paul seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**I. FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

Council reviewed the January 2026 financial reports and the approval of vendor checks, along with EFTs and payroll. Council President Gifford moved to approve the financial reports and associated payments, and Councilor Lee seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**J. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT.**

Mr. Parente reported that he had nothing further to report.

**K. COUNCIL COMMENTS & MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

Mayor Drake discussed a recent visit from Congresswoman Andrea Salinas, during which Durham’s funding limitations, land constraints, and City Hall needs were reviewed, along with potential grant opportunities and assistance. Staff also reported that the City’s Metro Local Share grant application was recommended to move forward, with funding intended for ADA improvements for Durham Park.

**L. ADJOURN.**

Mayor Drake adjourned the meeting at 9:17 PM.

**Approved:**

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**Joshua Drake, MAYOR**

**Attest:**

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**Jordan Parente, CITY ADMINISTRATOR/RECORDER**