



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order.

The regular meeting of the St. Maries City Council was called to order by Mayor, Tina Thomson, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 09, 2026, in Council Chambers at City Hall, 602 College Avenue, St. Maries, Idaho.

2. Roll Call.

PRESENT

Mayor, Tina Thomson

Councilors, Cindy Willard, Jeff Pugh, Charles Winter, Ed Spooner, Waylon Newton, Janelle Buell

3. Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Thomson led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Consent Calendar. – action item

Mayor Thomson noted for the record the amount of expenses presented for payment approval, as shown below.

a. Approve Minutes from the Regular Council Meetings on January 12 & 26, 2026, and the Council Workshop on January 21, 2026. - action item

b. Approve Expenses from January 2026 in the amount of \$310,776.95. – action item

c. Approve Treasurer Report. - action item

Motion to approve the consent calendar as presented.

Result: Passed

Moved By: Spooner

Seconded by: Newton

Voted Yes: Willard, Pugh, Winter, Spooner, Newton, Buell

5. Old Business. – none.

6. New Business.

a. Public Hearing: Appeal for water service denial to property located outside of City Limits (98 Gracie Lane). – action item

Terrun Zolman, City Attorney, provided an introduction to the appeal request, stating that the request to connect to the City's water system outside city limits was denied at the time of application due to Resolution No. 2023-321. Applicants Daniel and Shannon Stuhlman presented their request, explaining why they believe the property located at 98 Gracie Lane should be allowed to connect to the City water system. The applicants stated they are a single-family household of two and have resided at the property since 1992.

Councilor Winter asked how the applicants have obtained water since residing at the property. Ms. Stuhlman responded that they pump water from the river and hold the required permits from the State. Councilor Spooner asked whether any improvements have been made to the Riverdale water line. Shiloh Pfeiffer, Public Works Director, stated that issues are addressed as they arise.

Pfeiffer stated he is very familiar with the Riverdale water system and explained that the line is a 3-inch high-density polyethylene pipe serving 22 connections. He stated the line terminates at Gracie Lane and includes a flush hydrant at the end of the line. Pfeiffer further explained that one water line comes from the northeast of Riverdale to serve properties on that side, and another line runs from the berry farm to Gracie Lane; however, the two lines do not loop together. Pfeiffer added that current users on the line are experiencing low water pressure.

There were no additional questions from Councilors for staff or the applicants at this time. The public hearing opened at 5:57 p.m. There were no written comments received. There was no testimony in favor of or neutral to the request.

Doug Ryan spoke in opposition to the request, referencing Resolution No. 2023-321 regarding water service outside city limits. Ryan stated that Councilors serve as representatives of the City and have a responsibility to protect City resources. He noted that Riverpine Estates water connections are an exception due to an older agreement allowing those hookups.

Sabrina Powell also spoke in opposition, stating that when the City utilizes wells intended for emergency use, the Avista expense to operate those wells is substantially high. Powell stated that water demand is expected to be worse this year than last due to current snowpack conditions and the addition of the RV park to the system. Powell suggested that individuals seeking City water service should consider annexation, as the cost should not be borne by City taxpayers.

There were no additional public comments.

Following public testimony, Councilor Spooner stated that when the Rochet Creek Dam was constructed, it was intended to serve City of St. Maries residents and those who granted easements for the project, including some properties outside city limits.

Applicant Daniel Stuhlman stated that the deed received when purchasing the property indicated that utilities were accessible. Zolman clarified that the deed agreement was between private parties and did not involve the City.

There were no additional comments, and the public hearing was closed at 6:10 p.m.

During deliberations, Councilors discussed water capacity concerns related to Rochet Creek and the need to explore options to increase system capacity. Councilor Pugh stated the Council must make a decision that does not negatively impact existing users or the applicants if a connection were allowed. Councilor Buell stated she had difficulty supporting City services for surrounding properties while denying the applicants' request.

Councilor Pugh added that the Council should consider the broader context, noting the applicants have resided at the property for approximately 25 years.

Councilor Willard asked what next steps would be required to move forward, noting the issue has persisted for several years. Pfeiffer stated that a first step would be installing water meters to determine actual usage, followed by coordination with engineers to discuss costs and potential grant opportunities. Councilor Pugh suggested installing meters on main lines to identify water loss and isolate areas needing repair, rather than metering individual properties.

Due to new information presented during deliberations, the public hearing was reopened at 6:36 p.m.

Doug Ryan spoke again in opposition, expressing support for metering specific areas and referencing water district boundaries. Ryan stated that some properties outside city limits currently receive City water service but are within county jurisdiction, and suggested working with Benewah County to address line issues.

Sabrina Powell reiterated opposition, questioning why the City should bear the cost of repairs and infrastructure for water lines located in the county, stating this places a burden on City taxpayers.

There were no additional comments, and the public hearing was closed at 6:38 p.m.

A motion was made to deny the request for City water service for the property located at 98 Gracie Lane, St. Maries, Idaho 83861.

Result:	Passed
Moved By:	Spooner
Seconded by:	Pugh
Voted Yes:	Willard, Pugh, Winter, Spooner
Votes No:	Newton, Buell

7. Reports and Communications.

a. Mayor's Update.

No Updates.

b. City Council Comments.

Charles Winter stated he feels bad for voting no for the water request however, they need to stay consistent and fair to all.

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Ed Spooner states that the Council and Benewah County need to work together.

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Janelle Buell stated that she was disappointed in the decision for water services and feels it can be decided on case-by-case basis.

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Jeff Pugh states that putting a plan together for water should be a number one priority.

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Cindy Willard states that Resolution No. 2023-321 was put into place in good faith.

c. Public Works Updates.

No updates.

d. Police Updates.

No Comments.

e. Council Training by Legal Counsel.

Terrun Zolman, City Attorney, gave a brief council training on the following high issue topics: open meeting laws, quasi-judicial role, and conflicts of interest.

8. Public Comments.

Kathryn Burnett, St. Maries City resident on 14th Street, stated that there are two houses on 14th Street between Jefferson and Lincoln Avenue that only have the option to access their homes from the alleyway. Burnett explains that during the winter, the alleyway is steep and requests that it be plowed by the City crew.

9. Executive Session §74-206(1)(f)

Motion to convene into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(1)(f) to communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation, or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated.

Result:	Passed
Moved By:	Spooner
Seconded by:	Pugh
Voted Yes:	Willard, Pugh, Winter, Spooner, Newton, Buell

The Mayor announced that those not participating in the executive session were asked to please exit the room. An executive session was held, as noted above.

The Executive Session ended, and the meeting was reconvened at 7:30 PM.

10. Adjourn.

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

I presided over this meeting and can confirm that the foregoing minutes, prepared by the City Clerk, were approved by City Council during their regular meeting held on _____.

Tina Thomson, Mayor

Attest: Jaidyn Kinzer, City Clerk