

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO,
HELD AT THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

January 20, 2026

The Mayor and Council of the City of Coeur d'Alene met in a regular session of said Council at the Coeur d'Alene City Library Community Room on January 20, at 6:00 p.m., there being present the following members:

Dan Gookin, Mayor

Dan English)	Members of Council Present
Christie Wood)	
Amy Evans)	
Kiki Miller)	
Kenny Gabriel)	
Dan Sheckler)	

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Gookin called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: John Padula of Set Apart Discipleship provided the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilmember Wood led the pledge of allegiance.

AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA: MOTION: Motion by Evans, seconded by Wood, to amend the agenda to make Item F2 Appointment of Dan Sheckler to Council Seat #3 an "Action Item," as required by law, as it was inadvertently not labeled as such. An emergency is declared because this action is necessary in order for the City to complete its agenda with a full Council. Mayor Gookin added that the appointments of Tonya Coppedge to the Library Board and Will Ahmer as Alternate Student Representative to the Urban Forestry Committee will be taken up at the next Council meeting on February 3, 2026, for the same reason; however, those items do not constitute an emergency.

ROLL CALL: Evans Aye; Miller Aye; Gabriel Aye; English Aye; Wood Aye. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Brian Seguin, Coeur d'Alene, expressed strong concern over the Kootenai County Republican Central Committee's choice of former Congressman Matt Gaetz as the keynote speaker for the 2026 Lincoln Day Dinner. He noted that selecting Gaetz represents a troubling departure from the values and standards expected of prominent community events. He urged organizers to consider the message being conveyed to youth, families, and the broader community when someone with a documented history of problematic behavior is given audience.

Tom Sanner, Coeur d'Alene, noted concern from a moral standpoint, noting his discomfort with a proclamation issued by the Mayor regarding Charlie Kirk and how it reflects on the City's moral values. He emphasized that moral expression matters, particularly in light of the discussion surrounding Matt Gaetz. He clarified that he was not opposing free speech but questioning why moral judgment is embraced when it is symbolic yet dismissed when it becomes uncomfortable. He urged city leadership to demonstrate moral coherence.

Bridget Hill, Coeur d'Alene, shared that she received email information earlier today indicating Republic Services would begin garbage service from the alleys again. She requested continued communication as the situation develops, including updates on Republic's timeline and any remediation work planned in the alleys.

Gabe Eckert, Coeur d'Alene, spoke in support of Resolution No. 26-005, noting that the Fire Department is experiencing significant transition and that this moment presents an important opportunity to restructure. He encouraged the Council to move forward with the proposed reorganized structure and voiced his hope for their full support.

Dylan Hughes, Coeur d'Alene, spoke in support of the potential sale of the Harbor Center property, and urged the City to fully explore this option as a viable opportunity to transform the surrounding area. He emphasized the importance of maintaining transparency throughout the process, particularly regarding the university's intentions for the site, and expressed concern over public access that could be restricted if the sale proceeds without careful oversight.

Ken Murphy, Coeur d'Alene, raised concerns about the recent issues with alley garbage service, questioning how the alleys became impassable after 14 years of functioning without problems and questioned what had changed to cause the sudden disruption in service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Miller reported that she attended the North Idaho Building Contractors Association (NIBCA) Joint Government meeting earlier today. She noted that the meeting was very well attended and featured the new Mayor of Post Falls as the guest speaker, who shared insightful new visions for revitalizing downtown Post Falls and advancing attainable housing initiatives. Councilmember Miller also announced that next month's speaker for the February 17 meeting will be Mayor Dan Gookin.

Councilmember English noted that the Mayor and two Councilmembers are named Dan; and remarked that he is willing to resume using the nickname "Butch," as he has in the past, to avoid confusion.

Mayor Gookin requested the appointment of Dan Sheckler to Council Seat #3.

MOTION: Motion by Evans, seconded by Miller, to confirm the appointment of Dan Sheckler to Council Seat #3.

ROLL CALL: Miller Aye; Gabriel Aye; English Aye; Wood Aye; Evans Aye. **Motion carried.**

The Oath of Office for Councilmember Dan Sheckler was administered by City Clerk Renata McLeod.

RECESS: Mayor Gookin called for a recess at 6:19p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 6:26p.m.

Mayor Gookin announced the current vacancies in the City Board and Committees such as in the Arts Commission, CDA-TV, Historic Preservation Commission, Parking Commission, Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee, Personnel Appeals Board, and Urban Forestry Committee. He noted that some of the vacancies have specific requirements to be filled. Application details are posted on the city website volunteer page [City of Coeur d'Alene - Volunteer Opportunities](#).

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. Approval of Council Minutes for the January 6 and 8, 2026 Council Meetings.
2. Approval of the January 12, 2026 General Services Committee Minutes.
3. Setting of the January 26, 2026 Public Works Committee Meeting.
4. Setting of public hearing for **March 3, 2026** - A-1-26 – a request for Annexation by: Aspen Homes and Development, LLC for a 1.937-acre parcel from County Ag-Suburban to City R-3 (Residential at 3 units per acre) located at 2739 E. Thomas Lane, Coeur d’Alene, ID 83815
5. Approval of Bills as Submitted.
6. Approval of Financial Report.
7. Approval of **Resolution No. 26-004** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COEUR D’ALENE, KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO, FOR THE FOLLOWING: A SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE OF EXTRA COURSE KILN DRIED BRINE SALT FROM CRAPO LTD PER IDAHO CODE§ 67-2808(2)(A); AND RATIFICATION OF THE PURCHASE OF OR EXPENDITURES FOR INVOICES FROM WASTEWATER, STREETS & ENGINEERING, AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

MOTION: Motion by Evans, seconded by Wood, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented, including **Resolution No. 26-004**.

ROLL CALL: Miller Aye; Gabriel Aye; English Aye; Wood Aye; Evans Aye; Sheckler Aye.
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-005

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COEUR D’ALENE, KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO, APPROVING AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF COEUR D’ALENE AND THE COEUR D’ALENE FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL NO. 710, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS (IAFF), ESTABLISHING A DIVISION CHIEF RANK AND COMPENSATION, AS WELL PROVIDING FOR THE RE-ORGANIZED STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT.

STAFF REPORT: Fire Chief Tom Greif provided an overview of a proposed reorganization within the Fire Department administrative command staff structure following the historical transition of the Division Chief/EMS role to an exempt Deputy Fire Chief approximately sixteen years ago, and the subsequent establishment of an EMS Officer classification in 2020. With the

EMS Officer position now vacant and the upcoming retirements of two Deputy Fire Chiefs and the Fire Chief in 2026, the department proposes restructuring the EMS Officer role into a Division Chief position overseeing EMS, Training, and Logistics, compensated at a converted 40-hour Captain wage. Through attrition, the exempt Deputy Fire Chief roles would be replaced with an exempt Assistant Fire Chief and hourly Division Chiefs. The amended agreement adds the Division Chief classification, an availability/on-call pay structure, a \$5.00 per hour paramedic stipend for the EMS Division Chief, and an HRA VEBA benefit. The financial impact reflects updated salary ranges, with an anticipated annual budget increase of approximately \$56,103, including the proposed Assistant Fire Chief position for transparency. Chief Greif noted that the changes align with industry standards, support succession planning, and improve internal career pathways. He requested City Council to approve the amendments to the International Association of Firefighters Local 710 Agreement to establish the Division Chief rank, compensation, and the proposed reorganizational structure.

DISCUSSION: Mayor Gookin asked whether the proposed organizational structure is typical for fire departments. Chief Greif responded that “typical” is not necessarily the right term, as the structure largely depends on the size of the department, larger agencies tend to have more layers. He explained that he consulted with departments of similar size and found that having an exempt management layer is important. Chief Greif added that, in his discussion with Councilmember Wood, they reviewed the progressive discipline and internal investigation processes, which would remain in place, and emphasized that maintaining the Assistant Chief and Fire Marshal positions is essential to the department’s overall structure. Councilmember Wood thanked Chief Greif and Mr. Gabe Eckert for the time they rendered addressing her questions, noting that she was initially concerned about establishing clear lines of authority. She stated that, with the progressive discipline process remaining under the responsibility of the Assistant Chief and the Fire Chief, she is now comfortable with the structure with the union in the proper role to represent their members. She added that bringing up the importance of EMS within the organization is appropriate and further strengthens the clarity of roles. Councilmember Gabriel remarked that the development of an EMS position began well before COVID-19. He thanked Chief Greif for the perfect foresight. Chief Greif further explained that simply adding more responsibilities to top leadership is not an effective model for the department. Instead, the proposed structure creates a sustainable framework that supports internal advancement and encourages line personnel to move up within the organization.

MOTION: Motion by Gabriel, seconded by Miller, to approve **Resolution No. 26-005** - Approving Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement between the City and the Coeur d’Alene Firefighters Local No. 710, International Association of Firefighters, establishing a Division Chief rank and compensation, as well as the proposed re-organized structure of the Department.

ROLL CALL: Gabriel Aye; English Aye; Wood Aye; Evans Aye; Sheckler Aye; Miller Aye. **Motion carried.**

RESOLUTION NO. 26-006

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE, KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO, APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH BESTDAYHR FOR CITYWIDE CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY.

STAFF REPORT: Human Resources Director Melissa Tosi noted that the City's last comprehensive classification and compensation study was completed in 2017, and due to significant job market changes and the increasing difficulty of evaluating classifications individually, a new city-wide study is now recommended. The proposed project, to be conducted by BestDay HR, will include reviewing all pay grades for compression or misalignment, evaluating fire and police pay structures and ranks, and analyzing police specialty pay, culminating in updated wage ranges, job matches, and recommendations within a three-month timeline. The total project cost is \$55,000, with \$30,000 already budgeted and the remaining amount to be covered through Human Resources savings and prior unused allocations. Ms. Tosi stated that the study will improve market competitiveness, internal equity, and organizational effectiveness and has been discussed with all three bargaining groups. LCEA agrees to support a wage study to be performed by a consultant chosen by the City, the CDA Firefighters Local 710 agree to participate in the study, and the Police Officer Association also supports the study to review represented police positions.

DISCUSSION: Mayor Gookin noted that the consultant's study is expected to take three months and asked when the work would begin. Ms. Tosi responded that the consultant is prepared to start as soon as the agreement is signed. Mayor Gookin added that the LCEA contract includes a requirement for approval by June 30, and Ms. Tosi confirmed that the project timeline will allow them to meet that deadline. Councilmember Wood explained that although she had considered a counterproposal, the City previously agreed with LCEA to use a consultant, and she supports moving forward with the wage study, noting that it will provide valuable information. She emphasized the need for a strategic plan to address how the City will respond if the study shows wages are below market and suggested that the Council direct staff to develop a five-year strategic plan to implement this, including exploring shared-resource opportunities with local entities. She added that Post Falls is also conducting a wage study. Ms. Tosi added that she had spoken with the Post Falls HR Director, who reported that their initial consultant fell through in recent months, but they have since secured a new private-sector consultant to move forward with their study. Ms. Tosi expressed confidence in the consultant selected for Coeur d'Alene. Mayor Gookin stated that the implementation plan could be incorporated into the Council's strategic planning session in April.

Councilmember Miller asked whether the consultant would be providing recommendations for implementing the study results. Ms. Tosi confirmed this, explaining that the consultants understand some cities face budget limitations and will present various implementation strategies based on what the City can afford. She noted that while the City has always been able to implement past classification and compensation studies, the recent market has been unusual, and this year's results may look different. Implementation could potentially occur over multiple years. Ms. Tosi agreed that a five-year outlook is appropriate, adding that collective bargaining agreements typically include market adjustments that help keep compensation current. She emphasized that maintaining a competitive pay plan requires ongoing adjustments as part of the broader five-year strategic plan.

Councilmember English expressed his support for the proposal, noting that the study is a routine and necessary part of maintaining a good organizational model. He noted that, while the cost is small within overall personnel expenses, it is essential to stay current with market changes and have the information needed to make informed decisions.

Councilmember Sheckler asked why the study focuses only on base salary and wages rather than including benefits, bonuses, or total compensation. Ms. Tosi explained that while past studies have included benefit information, the consultant's analysis has not been particularly useful, as it typically provides only a general comparison of what other cities offer; information that is relatively easy for staff to compile internally. She added that Coeur d'Alene's benefits are a strong competitive advantage, often helping offset slightly lower wages. For these reasons, the benefits component was excluded from the consultant's scope.

MOTION: Motion by Evans, seconded by English, to adopt **Resolution No. 26-006**, approving a Professional Services Agreement with BestDayHR for a Citywide classification and compensation study.

ROLL CALL: Gabriel Aye; English Aye; Wood Aye; Evans Aye; Sheckler Aye; Miller Aye.
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-007

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE, KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO, APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH J-U-B ENGINEERS, INC., FOR THE 2025 - 2026 WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$319,800.00.

STAFF REPORT: Wastewater Director Mike Anderson noted that the Wastewater Utility annually prioritizes replacement and rehabilitation of aging sewer infrastructure, with this year's key project being upgrades to the Mill River Sewer Pump Station, designed in the prior year to address current and future flow needs. Following a 2025 qualifications-based selection process under Idaho Code §67-2320, J-U-B Engineers, Inc. was identified as the most qualified provider and is recommended for a contract covering the 2025/2026 Wastewater Collection System Capital Improvements Projects. The proposed scope totals \$319,800 for project management, the Mill River Lift Station improvements, and a management reserve. With \$900,000 budgeted for FY 25/26 and a \$315,000 underspend from the prior year, adequate funding without requiring a budget amendment is anticipated. The improvements will enhance capacity, support anticipated growth, and improve system reliability.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Anderson clarified that the site is near the Honda dealership along Seltice Way and noted that nearby residents will experience some impact when entering and exiting their neighborhood due to lane work. However, he emphasized that the disruption should be limited to that immediate community, and the main pipeline running under Seltice Way is in good condition and will not require work, which will help minimize broader traffic impacts. Councilmember Wood asked about the project's timeline, and Mr. Anderson explained that they plan to go out for bid in March, start work around May, and finish within the construction season, with asphalt completed

before the plant closes. Councilmember Gabriel asked whether the project is part of the department's broader strategic plan, which Mr. Anderson confirmed, noting they had anticipated the need and set aside funding.

MOTION: Motion by Gabriel, seconded by Wood to adopt **Resolution No. 26-007**, Approving an Agreement with JUB Engineering, Inc., for the 2025-2026 Wastewater Collection System Capital Improvement Projects in the amount of \$319,800.00.

ROLL CALL: English Aye; Wood Aye; Evans Aye; Sheckler Aye; Miller Aye; Gabriel Aye.
Motion carried.

DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO HARBOR CENTER LEASE/ SALE

STAFF REPORT: City Administrator Troy Tymesen introduced Dr. Andrew Fields, University of Idaho Center Executive Officer. Dr. Fields outlined the university's vision of expanding experiential learning, advancing research, and serving the entire state through its land-grant mission. He emphasized the significance of the Coeur d'Alene Education Corridor and expressed deep appreciation for the City's long-standing leadership in developing a multi-institutional campus that creates strong partnerships and educational opportunities. Dr. Fields requested authorization for the Gookin administration to enter negotiations with the University for the possible purchase of the Harbor Center building and associated land, noting that ownership would allow the University to better steward public resources, access state funding for building upgrades, and strengthen long-term program development. He reviewed the University's decades-long presence in Coeur d'Alene, its lease of the Harbor Center since 2002, investments in operations and capital improvements, and its extensive research, teaching, and community engagement activities including water research, robotics, medical sciences, and collaborations with North Idaho College (NIC). Dr. Fields emphasized that permanent ownership would enhance stability for students, faculty, and staff, support workforce needs, and solidify the University's role as Idaho's only R1 research institution. He invited Councilmembers to engage in the process through meetings and workshops, reiterated that approval would only authorize negotiations and discuss options, not obligate the City to a sale, and closed by expressing gratitude for the City's partnership and support.

DISCUSSION: Councilmember Miller thanked Dr. Fields for the presentation and asked how progress on negotiations would be reported back to the City Council. Dr. Fields explained that the University envisions beginning with discussions to outline potential options and obtaining a third-party assessment and appraisal of the land and building. If both parties reach an agreed-upon proposal, it would then be brought back to the City Council for approval and also submitted to the State Board of Education for its approval.

Councilmember Sheckler asked whether the stability the University seeks could be achieved through a long-term lease, such as a 10- to 50-year agreement, rather than by purchasing the property. Dr. Fields replied that a longer lease could be explored, noting that the University has been in the building for many years and significant upcoming improvements would be eligible for state funding only if the University owned the facility. He added that the current lease expires in

June 2028 and, while options exist, ownership would allow the University to fully establish itself as a permanent presence in the community.

Councilmember Wood thanked Dr. Fields for his presentation and expressed strong support for the University of Idaho's role in the Education Corridor, noting that its presence was intentional and part of the community's long-term vision dating back to NIC's 2009 land purchase. She emphasized the importance of providing local students with access to quality education without leaving the region and highlighted the University's significant economic impact, calling it an essential asset to the community. Councilmember Wood said she is very open to discussions about giving the University a permanent home and supports further exploration while acknowledging that the City must also consider factors such as the wastewater treatment plant and specific land needs.

Councilmember English expressed strong support for exploring the University's proposal, noting that the partnership is long-standing and that providing stability whether through a sale or another arrangement could benefit both parties. He added that the Education Corridor's history and mission align with his own support for higher education. He said he is open to negotiations and confident that details such as land boundaries can be resolved.

Councilmember Gabriel also voiced support for Dr. Fields and the University but asked whether selling adjacent property might limit future wastewater treatment plant expansion or public access to BLM land and commercial docks. Mayor Gookin clarified that the Council is not committing to a sale but only authorizing staff to begin negotiations, with options ranging from selling both the building and land to maintaining a lease structure. He noted that the wastewater master plan identifies the University as part of future planning, and that land needs will be carefully evaluated. Dr. Fields emphasized the University's commitment to finding a mutually beneficial solution and noted that, as a public institution, its campus would remain open to the community. Councilmember Evans then asked about the expected timeline for updates if negotiations move forward. Dr. Fields said they would like to reach a proposal by summer, though that timeline is flexible, and confirmed that the process would include a formal appraisal of the property.

MOTION: Motion by Wood, seconded by Miller, to direct staff to negotiate the sale of the Harbor Center land and building.

DISCUSSION: Councilmember Gabriel asked City Attorney Randy Adams if the motion was appropriate with Mr. Adams explaining that it is up to Council to decide what to do. Councilmember Evans expressed strong support for the University of Idaho but shared concerns about limiting the discussion to a potential sale of the Harbor Center building and land without sufficient information. She noted the lack of a current map, unclear property boundaries, and the need for more discussion on wastewater impacts before considering a sale. Mayor Gookin noted that portions of the surrounding land are tied to the wastewater treatment plant's future expansion.

City Administrator Troy Tymesen added historical and technical context, explaining that the City originally acquired the Harbor Center property and adjacent parcels to protect the wastewater treatment plant, which sits at the lowest point in the system and depends on this land for current and future infrastructure needs. He emphasized that any negotiation would require redefining

boundaries, since the existing lines run through the parking lot, and clarified that the wastewater utility owns most of the land while the General Fund owns a smaller portion of the building. Mr. Tymesen also noted that although the lease rates have not offered a strong return on investment, the University's maintenance of the building has saved the City significant costs, and the City's original intent was to control the land, not the building. He concluded by reaffirming the importance of protecting wastewater operations while remaining open to working with the University.

Councilmember Wood noted that all the points that Mr. Tymesen raised are important and should absolutely be considered, but she emphasized that those issues would naturally be addressed through the negotiation process, with staff returning to Council with recommendations. She said this supports keeping her original motion as stated. Mr. Tymesen confirmed that it is a negotiation. Councilmember Miller added that she seconded the original motion because she understood the intent to begin discussions, acknowledging that the University has expressed interest in owning the building and that negotiations are the appropriate venue to explore how that option might work for both parties. Mayor Gookin commented that clearer directions can sometimes help staff. Mr. Tymesen responded that the negotiation itself will help determine whether the University is better served by owning the land under the building or by continuing with a lease, since the appraisal will value the building and land separately and guide how each piece can move forward.

ROLL CALL: Wood Aye; Evans Aye; Sheckler No; Miller Aye; Gabriel Aye; English Aye.
Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Wood, seconded by Gabriel, that there being no other business, this meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried.**

The meeting ended at 7:36 p.m.