



City of Chelan

**City Council Meeting
May 12, 2026**

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Mayor:

Erin McCardle

Councilmembers:

Augustin Benegas

Brad Chitty

Shane Collins

Jon Higgins

Tim Hollingsworth

Cesar Rivera-Vargas

Terry Sanders

Administrative Personnel:

City Administrator Laura McAloon

City Attorney Quentin Batjer

City Clerk Peri Gallucci

Deputy City Clerk Cailey Couch

Community Development Director John Ajax

Finance Director Heidi Evans

HR/Communication Director Chad Coltman

Public Works Director Jake Youngren

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.

Mayor McCardle recessed the meeting at 5:17 p.m. due to loss of internet.

Mayor McCardle resumed the meeting at 5:22 p.m. as internet was restored.

2. CITY COUNCIL APPLICANT INTERVIEWS

A. List of Applicants - in alphabetical order, by first name (Mayor McCardle)

- Ben Laughlin
- Brant Jones
- Cesar Rivera-Vargas
- Lars Strandberg
- Pamela Gean Van Gerpen
- Todd Higley

The interview and appointment process will be held **on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, beginning at 5:15 p.m., or shortly thereafter**, in Council Chambers at City Hall. Interviews will be conducted in alphabetical order by first name.

Each applicant will be provided up to eight (8) minutes to address the Council. During their remarks, they are requested to address each of the following questions individually:

1. How do you see your role on City Council in shaping its decisions and representing community viewpoints; what special skills or viewpoints do you believe you would bring to Council?
2. Please explain the difference in the roles, duties, and authority between the mayor and a councilmember.
3. Explain your motivation for serving on Council and what your priorities would be while in the position. How do you hope to make progress on these priorities?
4. A major part of the Council agenda in the coming months will be devoted to reviewing and adopting our budget. Recognizing that there are specific fiscal and statutory constraints on City government, how would you balance and evaluate fiscal realities with competing policy objectives?
5. What else would you like to say about yourself, your priorities or your vision for Chelan that you feel is important and has not been addressed?

Please note: Responses should reflect your own judgment and priorities, and please let us know if AI was used in the development of your statement. There will be no question-and-answer period during the allotted interview time. Given the number of applicants, we respectfully ask that you plan your remarks accordingly to ensure all questions are addressed within the allotted time. City Council Councilmembers will have reviewed your application materials in advance.

Following the interviews, the Council will adjourn into Executive Session to discuss the applicants and then return to open session to potentially take action. If a nomination is made, a motion and vote will be taken. The successful applicant will be administered the Oath of Office and seated immediately. The appointed individual must be prepared to participate in the regularly scheduled City Council meeting immediately following the appointment.

Council Position No. 5 currently has approximately eighteen (18) months remaining in the term; however, under state law, this appointment will expire upon certification of the November 2, 2027 election. To serve the remainder of the term, the appointed individual will need to run for office in the November 2027 general election.

Council interviewed the following candidates for Councilmember Position No. 5: Ben Laughlin, Cesar Rivera-Vargas, Lars Strandberg, Pamela Gean Van Gerpen, and Todd Higley. The Office of the City Clerk was informed day of, that Brant Jones had withdrawn his

application. During the interview process, applicants were asked to address each of the questions individually with the allotted (8) minute period.

1. How do you see your role on City Council in shaping its decisions and representing community viewpoints; what special skills or viewpoints do you believe you would bring to Council?
2. Please explain the difference in the roles, duties, and authority between the mayor and a Councilmember.
3. Explain your motivation for serving on Council and what your priorities would be while in the position. How do you hope to make progress on these priorities?
4. A major part of the Council agenda in the coming months will be devoted to reviewing and adopting our budget. Recognizing that there are specific fiscal and statutory constraints on City government, how would you balance and evaluate fiscal realities with competing policy objectives?
5. What else would you like to say about yourself, your priorities or your vision for Chelan that you feel is important and has not been addressed?

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. RCW 42.30.110(1)(h) - To Evaluate the Qualifications of a Candidate for Appointment to Elective Office - Action May be Taken (City Attorney Batjer)

At 6:04 p.m. Mayor McCardle stated there would be an Executive Session regarding RCW 42.30.110(1)(h) - To Evaluate the Qualifications of a Candidate for Appointment to Elective Office - Action May be Taken, for 30 minutes starting at 6:10 p.m. and would last until 6:40 p.m. Council Chambers were cleared, and the Executive Session began at 6:10 p.m. At 6:40 p.m. the Executive Session was extended by 20 minutes to 7:00 p.m. At 7:00 p.m. the Executive Session was extended by 10 minutes to 7:10 p.m. At 7:10 p.m. the Executive Session was extended by five (5) minutes to 7:15 p.m. At 7:15 p.m. the Executive Session was extended by five (5) minutes to 7:20 p.m. At 7:20 the Executive Session ended, and the City Council meeting resumed at 7:23 p.m.

MOTION:	Move to appoint Cesar Rivera-Vargas to fill the vacancy in Council Position No. 5, effective upon taking the oath of office, to serve until a qualified person is elected and takes office as provided by law.
MOVER:	Councilmember Tim Hollingsworth
SECONDER:	Councilmember Shane Collins
AYES:	Councilmember Terry Sanders, Councilmember Agustin Benegas, Councilmember Brad Chitty, Councilmember Jon Higgins, Councilmember Tim Hollingsworth, Councilmember Shane Collins

NAYS:	None
RESULT:	Passed

4. CITY COUNCIL POSITION NO. 5 OATH OF OFFICE

City Clerk Gallucci administered the Oath of Office to Cesar Rivera-Vargas, Position No. 5.

5. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Items not on the agenda. Time limited per the Mayor.

Lynette Grandy, resident of Chelan, expressed appreciation towards Councilmember Sanders for acknowledging the importance of the short-term rental cap discussion.

Vicki Martz, resident of Chelan, brought to attention the importance of including bed and breakfast lodging in the short-term rental discussion.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

All items under the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion.

A. May 12, 2026 Accounts Payable Checks and EFT's & Payroll Checks and EFT' s

May 12, 2026 Accounts Payable Checks No. 212840 - 212938 & EFT's totaling \$1,288,646.76 and Payroll Checks No. 103243 - 103256, EFT' s & Direct Deposits totaling \$538,224.12.

B. April 07, 2026 Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

C. April 14, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

D. April 28, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

E. May 05, 2026 Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

F. Ordinance No. 2026-1659 Title 1. General Provisions of the Chelan Municipal Code

MOTION:	Move to approve the Consent Agenda.
MOVER:	Councilmember Shane Collins
SECONDER:	Councilmember Jon Higgins

AYES:	Councilmember Terry Sanders, Councilmember Agustin Benegas, Councilmember Brad Chitty, Councilmember Jon Higgins, Councilmember Rivera-Vargas, Councilmember Tim Hollingsworth, Councilmember Shane Collins
NAYS:	None
RESULT:	Passed

8. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND AWARDS

A. National Public Works Week Proclamation

Mayor McCardle proclaimed the week of May 17 - 23, 2026 as National Public Works Week in Chelan.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. None.

10. MOTION CONSIDERATIONS

A. None.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Comprehensive Plan Discussion

Community Development Director Ajax presented the framework outlining the path forward for finalizing the Comprehensive Plan, which is scheduled for completion by December 31, 2026. He explained that the Planning Commission will conduct the required public hearings according to the following schedule:

- **June 17, 2026 – Foundation:** Chapter 1 (Overview and Vision), Chapter 2 (Land Use), and Critical Areas Ordinance compliance updates
- **July 15, 2026 – Community & Housing:** Chapter 3 (Subarea Plans), Chapter 4 (Housing), and ESHB 2266-STEP housing code amendments
- **August 19, 2026 – Economy & Climate:** Chapter 5 (Economic Development) and Chapter 10 (Climate Change and Resiliency)
- **September 16, 2026 – Infrastructure & Services:** Chapter 6 (Utilities), Chapter 7 (Capital Facilities), and Chapter 8 (Parks and Recreation)
- **October 21, 2026 – Mobility & Final Comment:** Chapter 9 (Transportation), the Peterson Place private comprehensive plan proposal, and omnibus public comment on the full plan

He further noted that City Council review and adoption are anticipated to occur in

November and December 2026, with meetings held on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., as follows: November 10, 2026 – Briefing, November 24, 2026 – Public Hearing, and December 8, 2026 – Adoption.

12. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

These items are for informational purposes only and are generally not discussed.

- A. Tentative Advanced Agenda (City Administrator McAloon)
- B. Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce Financial Report (Finance Director Evans)
- C. Contract Intake Log (City Clerk Gallucci)
- D. Parks Department - Memorial Day Weekend Update (Parks and Recreation Director Cooper)

13. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

City Administrator McAloon

She reported that Parks and Recreation Director Cooper provided a Memorial Day Weekend Update for Councilmembers' review under Information Items on the May 12, 2026 agenda. She reminded Councilmembers of the upcoming Association of Washington Cities (AWC) conference, scheduled for June 23–26, 2026, and asked those interested in attending to notify her or the Mayor to complete registration, as well as to indicate if they wished to serve as the voting delegate. She also shared that the Lake Chelan Airport tenant meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, and that a recap will be provided at the next City Council meeting.

City Attorney Batjer

None.

City Clerk Gallucci

None.

Community Development Director Ajax

Shared the house located at 418 E. Woodin Avenue was demolished.

Finance Director Evans

She reported the department is preparing annual reports for both the City and the Lake Chelan Airport. She also noted there is an opening for the front desk receptionist, noting the job description will be reviewed and posted to begin the hiring process.

HR/Communications Director Coltman

Acknowledged the following City Employees for their years of public service:

- Eric Goke, Water Treatment Plan Operator - 21 years
- David DeArmond, Assistant Crew Foreman - 10 years
- Thomas Tupling, Development Project Manager - 10 years

Public Works Director Youngren

He shared the following construction project updates:

- State Route (SR) 150 sewer line project is progressing, with paving anticipated on June 12, 2026. Shared construction work was temporarily paused for several days due to an archaeological discovery.
- Saunders Street project, noting that construction on the West side of the street will be brought to completion before work transitions to the East side of the street.
- Lakeside Trail project is in the punch list phase and is nearing project closeout.

He also shared the Public Works department partnered with Chelan High School, hosting more than 20 students who toured and observed the SR 150 project for some hands-on experience, supporting the next generation of construction workers. In recognition of Public Works Week, a public-facing event is scheduled for May 22, 2026, at Riverwalk Park and Emerson Park. The event will include a partnership with local schools for a “Touch-a-Truck” event on Emerson Street.

14. MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor McCardle

She thanked everyone who applied for Position No. 5 and addressed the short-term rentals (STR) response, noting that a response is being prepared this week and that the discussion will continue moving forward, acknowledging that decisions in one area often create impacts elsewhere. She encouraged maintaining a positive perspective regarding current disruptions around the city, emphasizing that failing infrastructure has been a primary concern over the past six (6) years and the City is actively addressing these issues. She reminded Councilmembers the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding executive session discussions and avoiding the disclosure of any information shared during those sessions. She also noted her intent to bring the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) priorities forward at an upcoming meeting to allow for a thorough Council discussion.

Councilmember Benegas

He echoed fellow Councilmember comments, thanked everyone in the audience for attending, and reflected on his own experience seeking a seat. Welcomed Councilmember Rivera-Vargas, noting the value of a different perspective and emphasizing that, while it is

easy to focus on what is not working, it is equally important to recognize and celebrate what is going well.

Councilmember Chitty

Reflected on his time away, sharing there is no place like home (Chelan).

Councilmember Collins

He thanked everyone for staying through the whole Council meeting tonight and congratulated Councilmember Rivera-Vargas. He emphasized the importance of the Association of Washington Cities conference, June of 2026.

Councilmember Higgins

Thanked all the applicants for the Councilmember Position No. 5 vacancy, reflecting that hard decisions were made, and congratulated Councilmember Rivera-Vargas. He acknowledged Public Works Week and suggested Councilmembers have a conversation regarding STRs.

Councilmember Rivera-Vargas

Expressed appreciation towards everyone who made the appointment possible and thanked his fellow candidates.

Councilmember Sanders

He thanked all applicants and welcomed Councilmember Rivera-Vargas. He also recognized the Public Works team, noting they are the backbone of the City, and reflected on the Manson Apple Blossom Parade. He concluded by requesting an update on electric bikes and scooters, and inquiring what enforcement may look like.

15. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:	Move to adjourn the meeting.
MOVER:	Councilmember Shane Collins
SECONDER:	Councilmember Jon Higgins
AYES:	Councilmember Terry Sanders, Councilmember Agustin Benegas, Councilmember Brad Chitty, Councilmember Jon Higgins, Councilmember Rivera-Vargas, Councilmember Tim Hollingsworth, Councilmember Shane Collins
NAYS:	None
RESULT:	Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Date Approved:

May 26, 2026

Signed by:

Cailey Couch

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Cailey Couch
Deputy City Clerk

Signed by:

Erin McCardle

0B62617A158B41F
Erin McCardle
Mayor

Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: 55077F8E-1EA6-8338-83D6-6A016FDFFB48
 Subject: Complete with Docusign: APPROVED 05/26: CityofChelanMIN_20260512
 Source Envelope:
 Document Pages: 9
 Certificate Pages: 2
 AutoNav: Enabled
 Envelopeld Stamping: Enabled
 Time Zone: (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

Status: Completed
 Envelope Originator:
 Cailey Couch
 135 E Johnson Ave
 Chelan, WA 98816
 caileyc@cityofchelan.gov
 IP Address: 63.142.209.138

Record Tracking

Status: Original
 5/22/2026 1:29:33 PM
 Holder: Cailey Couch
 caileyc@cityofchelan.gov
 Location: DocuSign

Signer Events

Erin McCardle
 mayor@cityofchelan.us
 Mayor
 City of Chelan
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication
 (None)

Signature

Signed by:

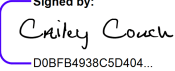
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 Signature Adoption: Pre-selected Style
 Using IP Address:
 2607:fb91:1e47:45ae:a532:2867:55b7:8602
 Signed using mobile

Timestamp

Sent: 5/27/2026 7:00:07 AM
 Resent: 5/27/2026 1:43:31 PM
 Viewed: 5/27/2026 1:48:03 PM
 Signed: 5/27/2026 1:48:10 PM

Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
 Not Offered via Docusign

Cailey Couch
 caileyc@cityofchelan.gov
 Acting, City Clerk
 City of Chelan
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication
 (None)

Signed by:

 D0BFB4938C5D404...
 Signature Adoption: Pre-selected Style
 Using IP Address: 63.142.209.138

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Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
 Not Offered via Docusign

In Person Signer Events	Signature	Timestamp
Editor Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
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Certified Delivered	Security Checked	5/27/2026 1:56:29 PM

Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
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Completed	Security Checked	5/27/2026 1:56:37 PM

Payment Events	Status	Timestamps
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