

CLE ELUM CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

JULY 14, 2026

6:00 PM

**119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call

Roll Call

Present:

Cassidy Buechle-Curtis
Ken Ratliff
Beth Williams
Steven Harper
Sarah Hubbard
Audrey Malek
Steven Cook

Staff Present:

Matthew Lundh - Mayor
Rob Omans - City Administrator
Erica Krum - Assistant City Administrator
Shannon Johnson - Planning Director
William LaRue - Utilities Operations Manager
Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director
Ed Mills - Fire Chief
Rich Albo - Police Chief

2. Public Comment – Limited to 5 Minutes per Speaker

The following individuals addressed the Council:

Dennis Applegate
Maggie Bator
Kathy Wybroski

3. Announcements, Appointments, Awards, and Recognition

a. Ratify the Mayor's Appointment of Fire Advisory Committee Members

Councilmember Ratliff inquired about the qualifications of the candidates. The Mayor responded that one candidate must be a resident of Cle Elum and one must be a Cle Elum business owner, and prior fire experience is not a requirement to serve on the committee; the objective is to incorporate a fresh perspective. The Mayor also noted that the committee seeks diversity among its members. Councilmember Harper remarked that there may have been confusion among the public regarding the council's expectations. He stated that council members aimed for a fresh outlook, which influenced their choices, and expressed the belief

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that candidates should possess fire experience. He emphasized that Ms. Battor would bring significant experience to the committee. Councilmember Buechle-Curtis stated that they just looked at qualifications and that there was no bias for anyone's background.

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to ratify the Mayor's appointment of Kenny Becker and J Michelle Swope to the Fire Advisory Committee; seconded by Councilmember Malek.
MOTION : 5 yes 2 no.

Kenny Becker — Business Owner Position

J Michelle Swope — Cle Elum Resident Position

4. Approval of Meeting Agenda

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda as presented; seconded by Councilmember Cook.
MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

5. Consent Agenda

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Councilmember Cook.
MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- a. Special Council Meeting Minutes — June 22, 2026
- b. Payables — July 14, 2026 — \$581,075.65
- c. Payroll Vouchers — July 2, 2026 — \$407,939.43
- d. Montgomery Street Watermain Project Acceptance

6. Department Head Reports

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- a. Rob Omans — City Administrator

Please see attached.

- b. Shannon Johnson — Planning Director

Please see attached.

- c. Mathew Bailey — Public Works Director

Please see attached.

- d. Rich Albo — Police Chief

Council members discussed traffic and speeding on 903.
Please see attached report

- e. Ed Mills — Fire Chief

Councilmember Harper inquired about the selling of firewood and the definition of a campfire. Chief Mills responded that campfires are permitted within approved cleared fire rings at designated campsites; however, open fires are not allowed. Councilmember Hubbard asked about the testing of fire hydrants. Chief Mills stated that Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, provided a demonstration at the fire department to assist with the testing and to show fire personnel how to test them.

- f. William LaRue — Utilities Operations Manager

Please see attached. Councilmember Cook requested that William LaRue, Utilities Operations Manager, provide an explanation of the components involved in class I and class II inspections as conducted by the Department of Ecology.

7. **Public Appearances – 15-Minute Limit**

8. **Business Requiring Public Hearings**

9. **Unfinished Business**

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10. New Business

- a. Timesaver PC Payables — July 8, 2026 — \$198.01

MOTION: Councilmember Buechle-Curtis made a motion to approve Timesaver PC Payables; seconded by Councilmember Ratliff.

MOTION : 6 yes 0 no.

- b. Intermountain Foundation — Crave! TV — Lodging Tax Application —
Councilmember Malek

Councilmember Malek explained that Crave! TV specializes in creating reels for food enthusiasts. Although Crave! TV initially requested a funding amount of \$15,000, the Lodging Tax & Events Committee deemed this request substantial. However, recognizing the potential of this new initiative, the committee concluded that a commitment of \$5,000 would be a valuable investment for the community.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve lodging tax funding for the Intermountain Foundation application in the amount of \$5000; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- c. Seasonal Library Aide Job Description — Rob Omans — City Administrator

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to approve both the seasonal Library Aide job description and adopt Ordinance 1730 ; seconded by Councilmember Hubbard.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- d. Ordinance 1730 — Salary Schedule Amendment — Rob Omans — City Administrator

This ordinance was approved with the motion in 10 C.

- e. Stormwater Plan Amendment — Mathew Bailey — Public Works Director

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to adopt the Amendment #3 agreement as presented; seconded by Councilmember Buechle-Curtis.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- f. Resolution 2026-024 — Ratification of Emergency Fire Hydrant and Isolation Valve Repair

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— Mathew Bailey — Public Works Director

The fire hydrant was reported as inoperable. Due to its broken condition, personnel were unable to isolate and address the leak. Consequently, it was determined that emergency repairs were necessary to restore the hydrant's functionality. Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, obtained multiple bids and selected the most competitive option for the repairs.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to adopt resolution 2026-024; seconded by Councilmember Williams.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- g. Resolution 2026-025 — Annexation Portion of State Route 903 — Mathew Bailey — Public Works Director

This action would initiate the process for the Mayor to execute the necessary documents to approve the annexation for Kittitas County.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-025; seconded by Councilmember Hubbard.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

11. Report of Committees

- a. Public Works & Community Development

Councilmember Cook stated that the draft stormwater code was discussed, with plans to continue the conversation at the next meeting or a dedicated study session. Additionally, an approach to South Cle Elum regarding an agreement for mutual assistance was considered. An amendment to the Cle Elum municipal code regarding sewer, as well as the filing and costs of repairs for hookups, was also discussed. Furthermore, the topic of a water line pavement repair on State Route 903 was addressed.

- b. Public Safety & Health

Councilmember Buechle-Curtis stated that they discussed bylaws for the Fire Advisory Committee, which will be forwarded to legal before returning to council. Additionally, they addressed issues regarding flammable vegetation and reviewed applicants for the Fire Advisory Committee. They will reach out to Councilmember Malek to incorporate her expertise on e-bikes for future discussions. The committee will prioritize camping and the

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animal code next.

c. Lodging Tax & Events

Councilmember Malek gave an update that the following events were approved: Cle Elum Round Up, Coal Mine Trails, and Mike's Tavern Car Show.

d. General Government

12. Councilmember Comments - Limited to 5 Minutes

Councilmember Ratliff requested an engineering report from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) regarding the proposed roundabout installations. He expressed concern about data centers due to their water usage and electricity requirements. Councilmember Harper expressed appreciation for the volunteers who assisted with the cleanup of city parks.

Councilmember Hubbard announced her resignation due to a health issue, stating that this decision was not made lightly and that she appreciates the public service and dedication of the council to the community. Councilmember Malek noted that the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) provided a valuable opportunity to engage with other councilmembers and communities regarding shared experiences and challenges, particularly related to fire services. She also mentioned that lodging tax funds could be utilized to support parks and sporting events, leading to beneficial ideas and educational opportunities.

13. Mayor's Report

Mayor stated that having a large contingent from our city and Kittitas County was beneficial for learning together at the AWC conference. He expressed that Pioneer Days was a great weekend and that the fireman breakfast was delicious as always. He and Councilmember Williams visited the District 7 training tower, noting that it will serve as an excellent training facility for the upper county. The Mayor mentioned that last week marked the summer reading kickoff for the library, emphasizing the joy of being a part of the event. He met with both Gary Berndt and Jon Corneous today regarding the tree board, highlighting their innovative ideas. Their first meeting is scheduled for August 4, during which they will begin inventorying trees in urgent need of maintenance.

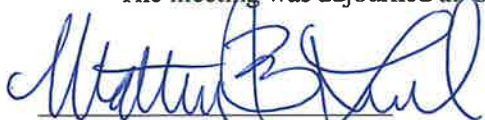
14. Executive Session

Started at 7:51pm and ended at 8:01pm

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15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.


Matthew Lundh, Mayor
Clerk